THE Freeman

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

JANUARY 1966

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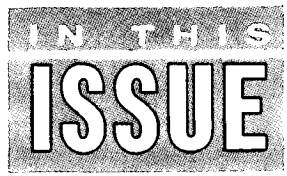

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THE Freeman

JANUARY 1966 Vol. 16, No. 1

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THE FREEMAN is published monthly by the Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., a nonpolitical, nonprofit educational champion of private property, the free market, the profit and loss system, and limited government, founded in 1946, with offices at Irvington-on-Hudson, New York. Any interested person may receive its publications for the asking. The costs of Foundation projects and services, including THE FREEMAN, are met through voluntary donations. Total expenses average $12.00 a year per person on the mailing list. Donations are invited in any amount – $5.00 to $10,000 – as the means of maintaining and extending the Foundation's work.

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Author of Liberty

EDMUND A. OPITZ

SAMUEL SMITH wrote the words for "America" in 1832, while a student at Andover Seminary. The fourth verse is virtually a prayer, beginning with the familiar words:

> Our father's God, to Thee,
> Author of liberty.

The prayer is addressed, not to some god in the Hindu pantheon, nor to the gods of the Medes and Persians, but to the God of the Bible, the God of our Judeo-Christian heritage. What is unique about this idea of God, and in what sense is he the Author of liberty? Let's go back a few thousand years. The common opinion in the ancient world – an opinion still prevalent – was that a god is useful to have around to sanction social practices, to guarantee prosperity, and to insure victory in battle. When the gods were angry, you had a run of bad luck, so you had to butter them up until you changed their attitude. If a crop failed, the god in charge either responded to your incantations, or you fired him. If your tribe lost a battle, this signified the superior medicine of the victor's gods, so you adopted them. The Victorian novelist, Samuel Butler, felt that many of his contemporaries still clung to such childish notions, which he satirized by declaring: "To love God is to have good health, good looks, good luck, and a fair balance of cash in the bank." Too many people, and not only in the ancient world, act as if they regard God as a sort of cosmic bellhop eager to run their celestial errands for them, while revealing the short cut to success and the secret of get-something-for-less schemes.

The Reverend Mr. Opitz is a member of the staff of the Foundation for Economic Education. This is a Sunday morning sermonette at a recent FEE seminar.

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One God

The ancient Israelites were the first people to discard the notion of a god kept on tap for luck and tricks. They lapsed now and then, but were jerked up hard by their prophets, who proclaimed the God of righteousness and truth; these men saw the workings of God even in their own poverty and defeat. Theirs was not a kept god who could be worked on by magic to serve the devious ends of men. He was the God of religion who laid down the rules for an orderly universe in which men, by learning and obeying the commands, earn their own way. This God cannot be bought or bribed – in contrast to the god of magic – and men see his handiwork in the preponderance of order, harmony, balance, and economy in the workings of the universe. This universe plays rough but fair; it can be trusted. Its trustworthiness, translated over into the material world, becomes the natural sciences tracing cause and effect sequences and drafting laws to describe the workings of natural phenomena.

A stone falls because it has no choice in the matter; hydrogen cannot refuse to enter into a combination with oxygen under certain conditions. There's no freedom at the level of physics and chemistry. But life comes onto the scene and adds a new dimension. On the biological spectrum with an oyster, say, at one end, and a chimpanzee at the other, we note an increasing freedom in the higher forms of life, culminating in man. The universe is not random but intentional, and one of its intentions issues in a creature gifted with a novel kind of freedom of choice.

Man appears on the scene, Nature's wayward son. The eminent biologist, Lecomte du Noüy, broadly surveys the planetary scene and declares that "everything has taken place as if, ever since the birth of the original cell, Man had been willed."[1]

Here, at last, is a creature so radically free, so insulated from the instinctual controls that guide animals, that he can defy the laws of his own being. Man's will is free; all other creatures obey the laws of their nature, but he alone possesses that radical freedom which makes it possible for him to deny his Maker. We sometimes accuse tyrants of trying to play god, but this is not an apt metaphor: God himself does not "play god"! We have the gift of an inner freedom so far-reaching that we can choose either to accept or reject the God who gave it to us, and it would seem to follow that

[1] Lecomte du Noüy. *Human Destiny*, a Mentor paperback, available from FEE at 60¢.

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the Author of a freedom so radical wills that we should be equally free in our relationships with other men. Spiritual liberty, of the sort men have, logically demands conditions of outer and social liberty for its completion.

The goal of collectivism is the perfect adaptation of man to society and society to nature. We challenge this goal with the conviction that every person has a destiny beyond society. He has a soul, for whose proper ordering he is responsible, not to society or to the state, but ultimately to God.

Inner Freedom

Such an understanding of the nature and destiny of man is the cornerstone of a free society. Whenever a significant number of people become aware of their inner freedom and its demands, they will have little trouble in establishing the secular institutions of liberty in their society. They will limit government so that there will be no political invasions of the sacred prerogatives of individual persons; they will secure every person's rightful property, and trust their economic problems to the market for solution. These things are in the realm of means, but they are indispensable means for shaping the right kind of social conditions out of which individual persons may emerge as society's completion and fulfillment.

Man does not *create* himself, nor write the laws of his being; but man does *make* himself. And as he does, he begins to discover who he is and what he may become. "That wonderful structure, Man," wrote Edmund Burke, "whose prerogative it is to be in a great degree a creature of his own working, and who, when made as he ought to be made, is destined to hold no trivial place in the creation."

May we then seek to serve the Author of our liberty, in whose service we find our perfect freedom. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Ancient Advice

IF THOU SEEKEST RESPONSIBILITIES, apply thyself to being perfect. If thou takest part in a council, remember that silence is better than an excess of words.

From *Instructions of Ptah-Hotep*, (written for the use of Egyptian princes some 5,300 years ago.)

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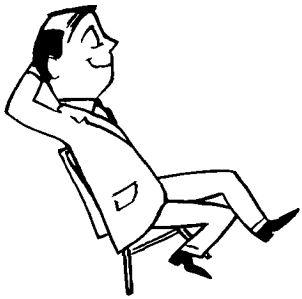

THE RELATIVITY OF RELATIVITY

MILLER UPTON

AS THE PRESIDENT of Beloit College and the principal speaker at this colorful and (hopefully) impressive opening convocation, I reckon my responsibility to be that of saying something to the college community that is both relevant and profound: relevant in terms of the beginning of a new college year and your needs during the year; profound in terms of the social relevance of what we are or should be engaged in here. This is quite a price to pay for having the honor of being president!

But I think maybe I can rely upon my experience to offer something relevant and helpful to at least the younger members of the community. I will leave to your judgment the element of profundity. I have discovered over the years a technique for escaping a discussion in which one has been involved and become bored or trapped – or at least changing the subject to something more personally palatable. And since part of our educational technique here at Beloit is to encourage discourse, dialogue, conversation, and discussion both in and out of class, one is well-advised to have such a handy technique readily available.

The technique I have reference to is to lean back in your chair, put your hands behind the back of your head, cross one leg over the other, and say in a most profound way: "Well, you know, everything is relative!" You will find that immediately silence will blanket the area, and it will eventually be removed either by all agreeing you are right and discussion ceasing

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This article is from Dr. Upton's Opening Convocation remarks at Beloit College, September 11, 1965.

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or by someone else barging in with a new topic. It is just like writing Q.E.D. at the end of a mathematical proof.

Now I wish that having provided you with this gem of advice I could sit down, lean back, cross my legs, and feel my job was done. But whereas this technique is very relevant to the real world of avoiding or winning discussion, it is not very profound. It works, but not being a pragmatist myself I would feel cheap offering it to you with real support. You see, like so many things fashioned by man's limited intellect, this statement promises more than it can really deliver. It is in essence a clever device and not a profound solution. Without always being intended as such, it is in fact a sham and a trick. It is only a partial statement with the superficial appearance of profundity.

Everything may be relative in terms of man's limited power to measure or to comprehend or in terms of man's own world of knowledge, but this does not mean that in the truth of the universe everything is relative. If everything were relative, where would this leave the principle of relativity? You know, "every generalization is false including this one." Well, by the same token, everything is relative including the principle of relativity.

I wouldn't give the matter so much importance were the principle limited to the use for which I have commended it. But when it is extended to possess the character of an absolute itself – to justify individual action, not merely curtail discussion – there is great danger involved. It becomes in essence a false God – a clever rationalization, not a qualified reason.

The New Morality

This is how I see its role in what is now being preached and peddled under the title of *The New Morality*. As I understand the thesis, since "everything is relative," there can be no basis on which to judge moral values in any absolute sense. Morality is a matter of circumstance, of prevailing conditions. What may be right in one situation may not be right in another. Or what may be wrong for one culture may not be wrong for another. Certainly there would seem to be strong evidence in support of this proposition, for different cultures throughout the world do in fact have different and even diametrically opposed customs, mores, and standards of value.

The whole proposition is very plausible, and certainly it is appealing to those who are threatened by the existing standards of value. In fact, it is so plausible and

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appealing that its advocates have become the moralistic and even pietistic spokesmen of the day – with all of the accompanying arrogance and smugness generally associated with the religious leaders of the day. Theirs is not the official orthodoxy, but theirs is the practicing orthodoxy just the same.

But despite its current ascendancy, this so-called *new morality* is just another of man's passing fancies in his historic quest for meaning and moral judgment. It is destined to eventual decline, if not extinction, for it is founded upon the shifting sands of the principle of relativity.

It has built-in contradictions, and is bound to dissipate itself through the centrifugal force of its circular reasoning. For, you see, the moral relativists, by making an absolute of the principle of relativity, have created a value structure that is subject to the same deficiency that they claim of all others. The only consistent relative value structure would be one that says there is *no* absolute and therefore *no* intrinsic values – not even a principle of relativity. Under *no* circumstances can there be a good or bad, or a right or wrong, for there is no absolute standard by which to measure such. There can be no purpose to life – no purpose in living – no meaning to society or social welfare. Therefore, bring on the atom bomb, the H bomb, suicide, homicide, fratricide, slavery, racial discrimination, thievery, rape, sexual promiscuity – so what?

Their Own Standards Preferred

The truth of the matter, of course, is that the moral relativists don't go this far. They don't really believe in the absence of moral standards; they merely want to substitute their own standards for the prevailing ones, and their adherence to relativism is a convenient device, albeit an inconsistent one.

Logic would seem to establish quite clearly that there can be no good or bad, no better or worse, no right or wrong without reliance upon some absolute frame of reference by which to make such judgments. There are some who judge values in only an evolutionary sense rather than an intrinsic sense. That is, they claim an act is good or bad on the basis of whether it is good or bad for society – whether "it works." But in so doing they tacitly concede the need for society, which in turn assumes a purpose to life, and this in turn rests upon the assumption of some ultimate good or ultimate truth. They are therefore not moral relativists, for they adhere to certain absolute presupposi-

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tions, even though it may be subconsciously. There are few, if any, practicing atheists, which one would have to be if he were to be a true moral relativist.

In essence, then, the *new morality* is neither new nor moral. Whenever man has become bored with or dubious of the existing moral code he has challenged it on the basis of the underlying absolutes. And when he wearies of the search for the real absolute, he is inclined to agree that there are no absolutes, that "everything is relative." But once he takes this position he forecloses his right to substitute another moral code, for he lacks a frame of reference by which to make moral judgments in general.

What is really at stake is not a new morality but a new absolute – a new frame of reference for making moral judgments. It is one thing to question the existing frame of reference, but it is quite another thing to say there is no need for a frame of reference. We may be correct in being disenchanted with the existing moral code, but we dare not try to say that no moral code can be defended on absolute grounds. For the fact is, this is the *only* basis on which a moral code can be established or defended. We may differ on what we believe to be the absolute, but we cannot differ on the need for an absolute if we are to agree on the need for a moral code.

But what has all this to do with education at Beloit in the year 1965-66? Simply that there is no purpose in education anywhere unless there is a purpose in life. Without an absolute assumed, there can be no truth to seek. If *everything* is relative, then ignorance is not merely bliss – it's *excellence*.

Upgrading the Intellectual Level

In the final analysis *education* is a goal and not a process, and in this respect it is fundamentally a religious enterprise. Its goal is to upgrade society by upgrading the intellectual level of the members of society. But such a goal presupposes an importance to society and the individual, which in turn presupposes a purpose to life, which in turn presupposes a basic truth of the universe – an absolute – a God.

By being at Beloit College every one of us, student and teacher alike, is committed to the assumption that there is an absolute – be it called God, love, brotherhood, justice, truth, infinity, XYZ, or what have you – and let us not try to weasel out of accepting this cold fact by some form of rationalization. We don't have to agree on what the absolute is or how it is manifested, but we do have to

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accept the existence of some ultimate truth, some ultimate goal to life. If such were not the case, then why should we be concerned with the intellectual growth of the individual student and the quest for truth? Our whole effort would be an elaborate system of meaningless busywork rather than an orderly process for the upgrading of humanity.

An Unknown Power

While I cannot prove there is a God (however defined), certainly no one can prove there is none. And to maintain the position that there is no God requires a reckless disregard of circumstantial evidence for the simple reason that nothing is likely to develop from nothing. For me it is enough for the time being to define God as that unknown and unseen power which is at the heart of the creation and operation of the universe and whose existence gives meaning to life. And it is the goal of human inquiry to identify and define this power in all its manifestations.

It is unfortunate that so many of us have tended to take such a hard and undeviating attitude toward the question of God as a result of a strong reaction against the historic and standard definitions of God. We should be able to differentiate between the concept of an absolute truth in the universe called God and prevailing definitions and descriptions of God. For example, I would agree completely with Hugh Hefner of *Playboy* fame as quoted in the July 19 issue of the *National Observer* when he claims that when we say that God created man in his own image we are tripping over our own ego, for what we really are saying is that man created God in his own image. This, of course, is the ultimate of arrogance and anti-intellectualism, but it should not cause us to react violently and irrationally by saying there is no God simply because we resent the definitions of God that now prevail.

The assumption of God, of an absolute truth, in other words, is necessarily at the heart of every educational effort. We don't have to know what it is in order to seek it. But we do have to believe that there is such in order to have the courage to persevere in the search and in order to have a stable society while we search. Let's differ, if we will, on the manifestations of God, but let us all agree on the existence of a God. Otherwise we will simply be spinning our wheels as are our moral relativist friends.

Truman Douglass, the Executive Vice-president, Board for Homeland Ministries, of the United Church of Christ, has

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stated in a magnificent capsule form what I have labored so hard here to try to get across.

"If humanity is to live," he says, "there must be men who know why they live. There must be not only persons of great skill in devising the means of life, but persons of great amplitude and zest and passion in their affirmation of life. There must be not only men with sharpened intelligence but men of vigorous purpose and strengthening hope. The Church should labor to insure that those who are members of the informed community shall also be members of the responsible community.

"There is a tragic waste represented by the gifted who remain uneducated. But there is an even greater waste represented by the educated who remain uncommitted."

Education Cannot Be Given, But Must Be Acquired

Again, what does all this mean for us here at Beloit College in the year 1965 as we begin a new college year – the second under our new plan? Simply this: If there is anyone here who came "to receive" an education, he should go back to his room after this convocation, pack up, and leave. (I really mean it!) Education like wisdom is acquired, not given. You must look upon it as something you are out to get on your own initiative – not be given. We can't give you an education, but we can help you acquire an education.

We have what we consider to be a curriculum second to none, an undergraduate faculty second to none, and a physical plant that is well on its way to becoming second to none – all of which means that you should have a better chance of getting educated here than most anywhere else. But you must constantly realize that the institution of Beloit College is merely the catalytic agent to the process. We don't dole out capsules of learning, we only provide the environment and means to encourage and facilitate your learning. The teachers aren't your competitors; rather they are your doctors of learning. You individually have hired them to help you in your individual quest for learning. Use them in this regard and expect them to serve you in this regard.

Also keep in mind that the measure of learning is not how many courses you have passed or course-credits you have garnered; it is only represented by how much you have grown intellectually – how vigorously you think, how well you see relationships, how concerned you are for the life of the mind, how informed you are, how reflective you are, how concerned you are for "the responsible community." We can't give you these qualities, but we can and will con-

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stantly challenge you to develop them and help you do so to the best of our ability.

Remember, too, that in this process "doubt is the beginning of wisdom." To question is the first labor pains of learning. But don't fall into the easy trap of thinking that it is the essence of learning. Asking the right questions is not enough; eventually you have to come up with the right answers. In the final analysis, the main purpose of education is to provide answers to the yet unsolved problems of man.

This goal presupposes that there is a purpose to life and that there must be a logic to life. It is not enough to say that everything is relative. This is merely an interim or stop-gap statement. Everything is relative only so long as we have not yet discovered the absolute, but this does not mean there is no absolute to be discovered.

Everyone's life must be founded upon some assumption as to the absolute or else there can be no stability to life, no basis for moral values. It is not necessary to say what the absolute is, only that there is such despite the fact that our small and finite minds can't conceive it at once in its entirety. In a way, all of education – all of learning – is a search for the absolute. And during the search we must each set our standards on what we assume it to be. We must be committed to some standard even while we are looking for it. This, as I see it, is our mission in the year ahead – and for every year to come. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Self-Reliance

WHAT I MUST DO is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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Individualism
versus

ANNE WORTHAM

THE DECLARATION of Independence of July 4, 1776, laid the foundation for a new society among men on grounds that each individual of right ought to be free to act on his own judgment, for his own goals, by his own choice. Human dignity, in other words, involves self-responsibility for life, liberty, and one's pursuit of happiness.

That essence of the Declaration of Independence is being subordinated and forgotten by today's black and white leaders of the Negro Revolution whose banner is "equality."

Let us recall what Abraham Lincoln said about this: "I protest against that counterfeit logic which concludes that because I do not want a black woman for a *slave*, I must necessarily want her for a *wife*. I need not have her for either; I can just leave her alone. In some respects she certainly is not my equal; but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns with her own hands without asking leave of anyone else, she is my equal, and equal to all others."

There can be no greater condition of equality among men than this. Anything less than this is slavery; and the direction in which the American people today are being led by civil rights leaders, in and out of government, tends toward slavery. A free man is not something emerged from a stew called society. The nature of a man's thoughts and actions, the life he lives, his concept of himself are the qualities of being human – the qualities of individual-

Miss Wortham, who spent two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in East Africa following college graduation, looks for a career in free-lance writing.

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ity, rather than the gray sameness of imposed equality.

The Constitution of the United States was designed to protect the rights of the individual against trespass by other individuals, or by government. But the original code made no provision for the abolition of slavery or recognition of the Negro as an individual. Section 9 of Article I denied to Congress power to prohibit the importation of slaves prior to 1808, and Section 2 of Article IV required the states to comply with the claims of lawful owners for the return of fugitive slaves. Based in part upon these provisions, the United States Supreme Court ruled in 1857 that Dred Scott – a Negro slave – did not acquire the rights of citizenship when taken into a free state.

A Civil War was waged before the Thirteenth Amendment cleared the Constitution of a serious contradiction and established that, if men are to live as men, they must be free to do so. The Reconstruction Era further clarified the extent to which *states' rights* could be practiced without interfering with the individual's *human rights* and without denying his *civil rights*. While these rights had been defined before, they had not been extended to Negroes.

The Constitution, as supplemented by the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, makes clear that the powers of the state governments as well as of the Federal government extend no further than needed for protection of the human and civil rights of the individual against encroachment by government and other individuals. Neither mentioned nor recognized are any "rights of society," society having no rights. By 1875, all questions concerning citizenship for Negroes in the United States, and their rights as individuals, were answered in the Constitution.

Solving the Problem Voluntarily

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the question before the people – all citizens, with inalienable rights as members of the human race – was this: How are we to live together? "In all things purely social we can be as separate as fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress," answered Negro leader, Booker T. Washington in 1895. The national concensus at the close of the nineteenth century was that black and white men should live separately; but such concensus did not empower governments to legislate how men should live or where each must sit, eat, dance, learn, and otherwise lead his life.

Nevertheless, the United States

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Supreme Court's separate-but-equal doctrine of 1896 had stood as law until 1954, when the Court reversed itself to the effect that henceforth men must live, sit, eat, dance, and learn in the same places. But the compulsory integration of the schools was no more required by the Constitution nor necessary for fulfillment of the human rights and civil rights of Negroes than had been the compulsory separation before 1954. Education is no more the business of the Federal government than is eating or dancing or the seating arrangement on a train or bus.

The Negro role in the civil rights movement gained impetus after the Supreme Court decision in 1954, and their main thrust was to the effect that Negroes had been deprived of their rights as a group. Scarcely anyone bothered to ask what rights inhere in groups or to stand in defense of the rights of the individual. It seems safe to say there were few individuals, if any, among the 210,000 marchers on Washington on August 28, 1963; and the net effect was a Congress and a nation made more race conscious than ever before. The resultant Civil Rights Act of 1964 elevated the dubious principles of altruism, collectivism, and racism above life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

A Staggering Sense of Guilt

The brotherhood of selfless love espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr., has not left a situation of mutual respect among Negroes and whites but a nation staggered by a sense of guilt. Irresponsible leadership in the name of civil rights is conning a nation out of its incentives to productivity into sanctioning the undeserved, causing the freest people on earth to sacrifice that freedom for the compulsory equality of slaves.

Civil rights leaders and their followers stress self-sacrifice to the point that self-respect is made to seem a sin. To love and choose without discrimination displaces sound reasons among men to love or choose one person or thing above another. This strained and strange love of racist agitators provokes men to hate them more. They turn simple prejudices into acts of crazed violence – that they might passively endure and resist. They twist man's right to discriminate into an immorality, thrown at a nation as its major guilt. As virtuous victims, they demand freedom, equality, and respect for the pitiable little they have to offer, challenging the nation to redeem itself by redeeming them.

How goes the redemption? Look in the eyes of blacks and whites who are afraid to think, to judge,

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to discriminate, and you will see an uncertainty embedded in hatred. Negroes, who are told they have gained the respect and gratitude of society but who have no self-esteem, are frightened by a power of redemption which they secretly know they – as individuals – have not earned.

No rational, self-responsible individual relies upon the racism that plagues the nation. He does not beg for patronage, sympathy, and smiles. Instead of asking that others grant him a living, he knows he has been born with an inalienable right to whatever life he is capable of earning, according to his own purpose, his own virtues, which others cannot give to him and cannot take away.

Student Demonstrations

It was inevitable that the youthful students of America would be drawn by their immaturity into the fight for civil rights. From the beginning of the collective movement, climaxed by the March on Washington, the racism of the nation was reflected by the young and selfless black and white youth of America.

White youths, in all sincerity, wanted to share the plight of their Negro counterpart. They had no "cause," so they made his cause their own. They evaded the real issue – that they did not know themselves – and transformed this ignorance into a feeling of guilt for being different from the Negro. In search of virtue, they marched and shouted, "Freedom Now," clenching a Negro's hand, entering restaurants with him where they knew he would not be served, scouting the countryside singing songs of deliverance for him.

Young Negroes joined their white counterparts, believing that any happiness to be achieved on earth must be achieved collectively; they had never been allowed to forget the collective misery of their forefathers. Lacking the individuality that can only come through earned self-esteem, they were content with the motives of the group. Personal motives? None.

Among black and white youth alike, their relationship with the group was primary when it should have been secondary. They hid behind the apron of a race, a church, a university, an SNCC, a CORE; and they claimed identities according to the characteristics of such groups. They repeated to themselves what others said of them; their self-regard was the regard they thought others had for them; their self-esteem dependent upon the esteem of others; their achievements what others claimed to be achievements; their failures

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what others said were failures; their place in the world where others said it was. They had no standards of their own; and so these youths were misled. Their guilt was not in being *black* or *white,* but in being nothing, in seeking virtue in the impossible, encouraging one another simply to suffer and wave flags.

The fact is that within the context of our society, they will always be black or white; and by some persons they will be treated as such, regardless of laws, treaties, and proclamations to the contrary. But a more important truth that escaped those young persons is that they are human beings; that each has a life for which he is responsible; that this is what he holds in common with other human beings; that to live with one another in peace, each must first manage to live with himself.

Such were the "drummer boys" of America who led forth a nation, their elders following, in the revolutionary movement capped by the signing of the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964. This new law of the land deals with eleven basic aspects of what the nation's legislators call civil rights: voting, public accommodations, public (governmentally managed) facilities, school desegregation, the Federal Civil Rights Commission, nondiscriminatory use of Federal funds, equal employment opportunity, voting census, a Federal Community Relations Service, civil rights court procedures, and jury trials.

A careful study of the detailed provisions of these 11 titles under the Act may reveal some minor clarifications of points already covered by the Constitution and existing legislation, as in Title 1 on Voting and Title 10 on Court Procedures. But these are hardly what the civil rights revolution was all about. For the most part, the major provisions of the new Act tend to arrogate powers to the Federal government, in the name of Civil Rights, that are none of the government's business because they have to do with regulation and control of what ought to be strictly private business relationships.

The overwhelming tendency of the Act is to deny the civil rights of producers – property owners – in favor of the wishes of those seeking something for nothing, making the Federal government the instrument of compulsion for the implementation of such injustice. Thus, the attempt to appease organized racists has invoked a condition of legislative enslavement on the entire nation – and it will take a police state to enforce this condition. ◈

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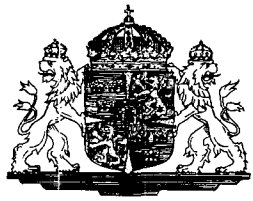

SWEDEN'S GREAT SOCIETY

SAM H. HUSBANDS, JR.

SWEDEN frequently is offered as a shining example of successful socialism. A picture is drawn of the attractive, cheerful, and socially-conscious Swede living out his days in the euphoria of the welfare state; and the visitor to that country finds his cursory observations seem to confirm that appraisal.

The accuracy of that picture, however, depends on —

1. How prosperous the people are,
2. Whether Sweden's prosperity is because of, or in spite of, its degree of commitment to socialism, and
3. The cost of state intervention in material as well as human terms.

As an American banker managing a Scandinavian branch of his bank recently told me, "The Swedes are too smart to kill the source of the wealth which makes possible their massive welfare programs. There are few nations in the world that rely more on the free enterprise system in the production end of the economy." The following figures confirm this point by indicating the extent of private ownership of production in prominent areas of industry and trade.

Not only has the productive end of the economy remained for the most part in private hands, but the Swedes have also made sure that within a framework of government guidelines, there remain some real incentives and rewards for producing.

While there are both local and national corporate tax rates, the national rate is 40 per cent and the combination will seldom reach 50 per cent. In turn, the determination of income for tax purposes

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shows the relatively liberal treatment the corporation receives in Sweden. Swedish tax law is especially lenient on inventory evaluation, depreciation, and certain investment reserves. Swedish tax rules allow a corporation discretion within a wide area to take large or small deductions in any one year. This discretion allows a corporation considerable latitude in leveling out annual results in building up reserves. Though details of the three areas would be too extensive to present here, the liberality of depreciation of machinery and equipment is worth noting.[4]

In areas of capital gains and losses, the Swedes are again rela-

[4] Martin Norr, Claes Sandels, *The Corporate Income Tax in Sweden*, 1963.

PERCENTAGE OF OWNERSHIP OF INDUSTRY
(Based on Number of Employees in 1951)[1]

	Private	*Government*	*Cooperatives*
Forest	82.3	17.7	—
Mining & Manufacturing	92.4	6.1	1.5
Timber	96.7	2.6	0.7
Pulp & Paper	97.0	1.5	1.5
Food	83.5	7.9	8.6
Textiles	97.7	1.1	1.2
Chemicals	90.9	8.5	0.6
Electric, Gas & Water Power	31.7	61.7[2]	6.6
Building	71.6	27.7	0.7
Wholesale Trade	97.4	0.6	2.0
Retail Trade	88.3	1.1	10.6
Transport & Communication	45.7	54.3	—
Shipping	97.5	2.5	
Railways	5.5	94.5	
Bus & Tram Companies	61.4	38.5	0.1
Commercial Banks[3]	92.6	7.4	
Insurance	92.8	7.2	

[1] Stockholm's Enskilda Bank, *Some Data About Sweden*, 1965.

[2] State 10.2 per cent, municipals 51.5 per cent.

[3] Number of employees 1963.

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tively liberal in their tax treatment. Stocks and bonds and other capital assets (apart from real property) are not subject to income taxes if the capital gain is taken after five years – real property is nontaxable if held for ten years.

A Lot of Welfarism

Does this relatively liberal policy toward corporate enterprise and capital gain mean that Sweden is, in fact, the world's best example of the free enterprise state? Hardly – Sweden, like almost all of the Western nations, embraces a mixture of the free market and considerable state direction. In Sweden, however, the line seems rather clearly drawn between the relative freedom of the productive end, and the massive interference of the government in the distributive or consumptive end of the economy.

Social security, compulsory health insurance, a recently-enacted supplementary pension to the basic old-age pension, family and child welfare programs, unemployment insurance programs, direct rent subsidies, and government housing loans are well known institutions to the Swede (as they now are to Americans). Rent control was enacted in 1942 with rents on housing built as of that date fixed at the 1942 level. Rents on new housing are set to supposedly reflect the cost of construction. But rent control has affected the housing supply to the extent that some 400,000 persons are on the waiting list for housing in Sweden – 120,000 in Stockholm alone. Admittedly, were rents allowed to stabilize at free market equilibrium, many of those now applying for housing at below market rates would no longer be applicants. But the free market advocate would maintain with much empirical evidence that, to the extent government interferes in any market, including the housing market, the consumer is denied the standard of living and personal freedom he would otherwise achieve.

Welfare Costs to a Typical Swedish Wage Earner

What is the actual cost of socialist schemes to the Swedish wage earner?

It is, of course, impossible to arrive at an actual monetary price. Seldom are government welfare programs funded from taxes attributed to a particular program. General tax revenues invariably are drawn upon for the major portion of the cost of a "social benefit." At the least, this blurs the price to the individual of the government services. However, reading between the lines of *Some Data About Sweden,* one discovers

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that a typical Swedish household has earnings of about $3,000 a year, of which $1,050 goes for taxes. In return for such taxes a typical household might anticipate some $150 worth of free education, another $150 worth of free medical care, $150 worth of national defense, and an old-age pension promise of about that same $150 current value. Supplemental pension benefits recently have been promised, but these will call for higher tax rates, too, before they can be realized. These four major governmental services thus account for approximately $600 of the $1,050 paid in taxes. What of the remaining $450? There is a family allowance of about $140 a year for each child under 16. Unemployment insurance, housing loans and rebates, and miscellaneous costs of government should account for the remainder.

It would seem obvious that the wider the dispersal of tax-paid services among the entire population, the wider the tax base must be. Lawrence Fertig says that "in the United States 80 per cent of tax revenue is derived from taxable income up to $6,000. If the government actually confiscated all income remaining to taxpayers whose annual income was $50,000 a year or more, the Treasury would collect about $173,000,000, hardly enough to run the Federal government for a few hours."[5] The principle applies to Sweden as well. It is obvious that for practical purposes capital accumulation must occur in Sweden as it must in the United States, through capital gains. Materially, any citizen of an ever-growing socialist state finds he must work harder and harder to keep up with the tax burden treadmill, which in turn progressively binds him to the state. The loss of spiritual values resulting from ever-present government can only be measured in the hearts and minds of individual citizens.

Must America Follow Sweden?

The socialist would defend the Swedish pattern, and probably treat its welfare programs as only a step in the right direction. Though many Western world socialists have dropped nationalization of industry from their design for utopia, they all advocate continually increasing government intrusion into service areas and equality of material possessions through redistribution of income. Their defense is invariably that their policies provide for "the people's security" (and one might add, "whether they like it or not"). However, the pattern of

[5] Lawrence Fertig, *Prosperity Through Freedom*, Henry Regnery & Co., 1961.

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life which one sees emerge, while perhaps on a higher material scale, is merely another one of the authoritarian social structures which evolved from the revolutionary doctrines of Rousseau, Hegel, Babeuf, and Marx.

The American can no longer smugly claim this country as the last defender of the free market and individualism, when it is obvious that almost every device for effecting the eventual total welfare state in Sweden is now a feature of our own system of government. And both nations prosper relative to their more socialistic neighbors only to the extent that the social planners pragmatically allow the free market to function. ◈

JOEL DEAN

Misconceptions about Consumer Welfare

THE AMERICAN CONSUMER is, in the Great Society, the forgotten man. Antipoverty programs, the closed shop, foreign aid, minimum wage hikes benefit him little and are ultimately at his expense.

The consumer cannot count on the unselfish munificence of the government to look after his interests. Instead, he had best place himself in the hands of the self-serving competitor. The forces of competition alone can be counted on to compel suppliers, in an enterprise system geared to self-interest, to achieve results which will advance the welfare of the consumer.

The vigor of the competitive process is, therefore, our main assurance of social benefit and consumer welfare. Protecting and strengthening the competitive process (which is quite different from protecting the individual compet-

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itor) is the white hope of the consumer.

The main peril to competition is not bigness, not concentration, not conglomerates (variegated product lines), not mergers, not even price conspiracies. Instead, the main peril is prejudice: distrust of the competitive system in its modern guise. The roots of this prejudice are basic misunderstandings concerning the economics of consumer welfare. Six economic fallacies are particularly important:

1. That competition is declining and is now an untrustworthy control device.
2. That competition becomes "cutthroat" unless curbed by government.
3. That profits are at the expense of the consumer.
4. That advertising makes consumers captive and is economic waste.
5. That the best way to take care of the incompetent is to make competition soft.
6. That job security is best attained by slowing down economic progress.

Let's look briefly at each of these misconceptions. Although unobtrusive and eminently respectable, these economic misunderstandings are pervasive and perilous. They are working to undermine the protection that the consumer gets from vigorous competition.

1. Competition Is Declining and Is Now an Untrustworthy Control Device

Looking back nostalgically at the Tom Sawyer economy, we get a glowing glimpse of a structure of competition quite different from today's. We see small, independent, local business firms by the thousands: the local grist mill, lumber mill, brewery, and carriage shop. What we forget is that each of these glorified competitors had a tight little locational monopoly sheltered by miserable transportation. What we often fail to see in our modern economy is the competition that counts. This competition is outside the purview of the conventional antitrust case. It creeps in on little cat feet, unobtrusively at first. It is not quite respectable at the start (for example, the discount houses and early supermarkets). It often works its beneficial miracles below the surface of consumer consciousness through the vehicle of "value-analysis" by industrial purchasers (such as the revolution in welding, die casting, and oxygen furnaces). Its fiercest fighting front is often the research laboratory. This is the competi-

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tion that counts because it produces decisive cost savings, usually as a result of revolutionary new technology or spectacular rearrangement of functions, or dramatic displacement by substitutes. Generally speaking, it is outside the purview of the conventional antitrust case and the stereotyped concentration indices.

It is frequently an invader from outer space, that is, from a different industry or a foreign nation.

This is the competition that keeps the American economy among the most competitive in the world and that assures the American consumer a high and rising standard of living.

2. Competition Becomes "Cut-Throat" Unless Curbed by Government

One heritage of the great depression is a generalized fear of excessive competition. This fear leads on to the belief that the government must restrain these excesses by legislating minimum profit margins, for example, state "fair trade" statutes and laws against "selling below cost." This misconception has had an important role in shaping public policy, which is opposed to competition in several sectors of our economy, notably agriculture and transportation. Thus, despite formal professions of faith, the evidence is that we really don't believe in an enterprise economy — at least in these sectors. The precedent and the preconception that lie behind it are perilous for other sectors of our economy.

"Cut-throat" competition is a bogeyman whose influence is powerful but unwarranted. It is unwarranted because the degenerative tendency is a myth, probably. Even if true, it's hard to see how competition can really be excessively vigorous from the viewpoint of the national interest. The misconception arises partly from confusing injury to an individual competitor with injury to the competitive process. Competition, if it is effectively to serve the consumer, must injure individual rivals and even annihilate some. And the notion that this elimination of the unfit will inevitably reduce surviving competitors to a sole monopolist is a theoretical extrapolation, unsupported by experience and applicable in only a few industries where scale economies are overwhelming relative to the small size of the market.

3. Profits Are at the Expense of the Consumer

It is almost standard operating practice for people who profess concern for consumer welfare to view corporate profits as being at the expense of the consumer and opposed to his welfare. This anti-

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profit bias infuses the viewpoints of many officials in big government and particularly of those in regulatory commissions.

We should all recognize that profits are usually an index of success in serving the public. In a competitive industry, most of the profits go to the more efficient suppliers, not to the marginal supplier whose costly output is nonetheless required to satisfy the full demand at the prevailing market price. The consumer gets a bargain in the few profit pennies per dollar he appears to pay. He pays less than appears for two reasons. First, because losses that are not formally book-kept are not offset against reported corporate profits. Second, because equity capital, which is costly, is treated in accounting as a free good. The consumer gets a bargain, not only because corporate profits are partly illusory, but because the hope of profits and fear of losses (what makes the mare go) is the cheapest known form of incentive and remuneration.

4. Advertising Makes Consumers Captive and Is Economic Waste

Appalled by the huge sums spent on the advertising and annoyed by being a part of a captive audience, grieved by the gullibility of all consumers except themselves, and aroused by exposures of the hidden persuaders, many well-meaning reformers believe that advertising disfranchises the consumer and wastefully cancels claim against outrageous counterclaim.

Looking at the matter from the standpoint of the national interest in consumer welfare, we should recognize that advertising economizes leisure and is a cheap way for consumers to pre-shop. The most that advertising can do is to get a person to try the product; and his own experience with it, plus reports from his acquaintances and the synthetic experience of consumer research services, develops immunizing skepticism.

We should also recognize that advertising opens many more doors to new and beneficial competition than it closes. The best weapon against the hidden persuader of one manufacturer's advertising is that of his competitor, particularly the countervailing power of distributor brands which erode the consumer franchise of a manufacturer's brand.

5. The Best Way to Take Care of the Incompetent Is To Make Competition Soft

Much anticompetitive legislation and administrative and judicial case law is rooted in the thoroughly American and highly laudable

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desire to take care of the incompetent. The question is not whether society will look after the unfortunate. In this our society is doing a good job. The danger, instead, is that we will take care of them in the wrong way, that is, in a way that will deter incentives for self-improvement and will block the automatic adjustments of a competitive economy and prevent its serving consumers best. Charitable treatment of the less fortunate will be more efficient and less damaging to the growth and strength of our economy if it is entirely divorced from trying to protect the individual competitor against the consequences of his own non-competitiveness.

6. Job Security Is Best Attained by Slowing Down Economic Progress

The quest for job security is universal. Each of us is very much alive to any peril to our job. Most of us would like to feel that a beneficent government will look after this vital matter and make sure that economic change will not imperil our job.

Unfortunately, the competitive process has few champions and no lobby. The job security of the individual citizen can best be achieved, not by placing roadblocks in the path of technological progress, but instead by removing them. Society is better off to help the individual solve his problem of adapting to economic progress by supplying information, incentives, and opportunities for re-education, rather than by trying to slow down economic progress.

Economic misunderstandings like these six are causing a widespread, almost unconscious prejudice against competition. There is disconcerting reluctance to rely upon competition for the impersonal force which compels individual competitors, each geared to self-interest and trying to increase his own market power, to unconsciously serve society. ◈

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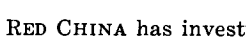

The Crafty Communists

RED CHINA has investments in Hong Kong which exceed that of American firms. These investments are in profit-making going concerns so as to earn hard currencies.

— Item from the souvenir book supplied guests of the Peninsula Hotel in Hong Kong.

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STATE ECONOMIC PLANNING: *Tragedy* OR *Futility*

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

DESPITE ITS PRESTIGE in some circles, there is convincing evidence to show that state economic planning regularly ends either in tragedy or in futility. Tragedy is foreshadowed when the planning is compulsive, under a system where the government concentrates all political and economic power in its own hands. Futility is the more likely outcome when the planning has no teeth in it and comes down to a mere exercise in exhortation or a statistical analysis of what would be desirable if a long string of doubtful conditions should be realized.

Among the innumerable victims of Josef Stalin's paranoid tyranny must be reckoned several million Russian peasants who perished, from maltreatment or starvation, because the Soviet dictator decided to force the abandonment of small farming in favor of large so-called collective farms, under close state and Communist Party supervision. One of the first consequences of this policy, which started in 1929, was a barbarous measure euphemistically described as "the liquidation of the kulaks as a class." The kulaks, some 5 per cent of the Soviet peasantry, were a little better off than their neighbors, although they were certainly not prosperous by United States or West European standards.

As they had more to lose under the collective farm system, they were naturally out of sympathy with it. So the government decided to get rid of them by wholesale expropriation and consignment to slave labor in northern timber camps and other state enterprises where living conditions were so bad that a high death rate was unavoidable. All over the

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Soviet Union the so-called kulaks (and the term was sufficiently elastic to apply to anyone who was outspokenly critical of collective farming) were rounded up, men, women, and children, torn from the farms which they and their ancestors had cultivated for generations, and packed in crowded freight cars for deportation to forced labor.

This was bad enough; but even worse was to come. During the winter of 1932-33 reports came into Moscow from many parts of the country, including the normally most fertile regions, the Ukraine and the North Caucasus, of hunger deteriorating into outright famine. Life was hard enough in Moscow, still harder in provincial towns; but there at least the people got a regular bread ration. The Soviet authorities displayed extreme reluctance to permit foreign journalists to go into the country districts and see conditions for themselves. But in the autumn of 1933, after the victims of the famine had been buried and a new favorable harvest improved the atmosphere, permits were granted.

Three Communities Sampled

Traveling with my wife, whose Russian is more fluent and idiomatic than mine, I picked at random three districts, separated by hundreds of miles from each other, and came on grisly evidence of one of the biggest mass murders in history. The first district was in the normally fertile and productive Kuban Valley, near the town of Kropotkin. One of the first noticeable things was the complete absence of the dogs, formerly numerous and loud barkers, in the homesteads. "All died or were killed and eaten during the famine," was the explanation. In the first house which we entered seven members of the family had died of hunger. Three had survived.

The president of the local Soviet in Kazanskaya, one of the largest villages we visited, told us that 850 people had died out of a population of 8,000. He also showed us a set of local mortality statistics indicating how the curve of death had mounted steeply as the last reserves of grain were consumed toward spring and the supply of dogs, cats, and weeds that were eaten as food substitutes began to run short. So there had been 21 deaths in January, 34 in February, 79 in March, and 155 in April.

From the Kuban we went to Poltava, a town in the Ukraine which had acquired a very bad reputation in Moscow; there were stories of carts that moved through the streets in the early

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morning to pick up the dead bodies. The authorities were nervous and defensive and gave us as much official chaperonage as possible. But as soon as we went from the town into the surrounding villages the peasants told us precisely the same stories as in the North Caucasus. Indeed, the possibility of lying about the tragic famine diminished steadily as one got away from Moscow and into the regions where the starvation had occurred. Here again there was a 10 per cent mortality figure, as against a normal rate of 2.5 per cent.

And I still remember the testimony of a fourteen-year-old girl, huddled on the bench which ran around the wall of the house. Had she a father? Yes, he was at work in the fields. A mother? No, her mother and four brothers and sisters had died of hunger. And her father was still hanging on to his own little plot of land, unwilling to accept the new servitude of the collective farm, even after most of his family had perished of starvation.

Still more terrible was the impression from the village of Cherkass, in the Belaya Tserkov district, farther to the West in the Ukraine. Here, with grim unconscious irony, one could see a blank space where a zealous communist had removed the ikon of Christ, but left the crown of thorns. And the president of the local Soviet, a young communist named Fishenko, told us that over 600 of the village's 2,000 inhabitants had perished. Of six children born during that grim year, one survived.

The Concealed Horror of Wholesale Starvation

In contrast to the situation in the earlier big Soviet famine of 1921-22, there was no doubt in 1932-33 about the responsibility of the Soviet government for the wholesale starvation, with its grisly accompaniment of bloated stomachs, cracking bones, and other aspects of death from hunger. The famine of 1921-22 was the result of a severe drought and of years of civil war. And the Soviet authorities admitted the need and invited foreign aid; Herbert Hoover's American Relief Administration undoubtedly saved millions of lives and various religious and humanitarian organizations, with their smaller resources, also made a contribution to relieving the disaster.

In 1932-33, on the other hand, the Soviet government did everything in its power to conceal that there was any starvation at all. With amazing mendacity its officials assured foreign visitors to Moscow that there was no famine.

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No outside relief effort was permitted. Yet the 10 per cent minimum death rate which I found in the villages which I visited (30 per cent in Cherkass), if carried over to a famine-stricken area inhabited by some 50 million people, warrants the conclusion that at least four million people, over and above the number who would have died from natural causes, perished in the concealed famine of 1932-33. To this must be added the number of "kulaks" who did not survive their "liquidation" earlier. Indeed, Stalin himself, in a moment of truth, gave a still higher figure of casualties in conversation with Winston Churchill in 1942. Here is the relevant excerpt from the fourth volume of Winston Churchill's work, *The Second World War*, pp. 498, 499:

" 'Tell me,' I asked, 'have the stresses of this war been as bad to you personally as carrying through the policy of the collective farms?'

"This subject immediately aroused the Marshal.

" 'Oh, no,' he said, 'the collective farm policy was a terrible struggle.'

" 'I thought you would have found it bad,' said I, 'because you were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landowners, but with millions of small men.'

" 'Ten millions,' he said, holding up his hands. 'It was fearful. Four years it lasted.'. . . .

" I record as they come back to me these memories, and the strong impression I sustained at the moment of millions of men and women being blotted out or displaced forever."

So there is the testimony of Stalin himself for the proposition that the war which he waged against a considerable section of his own people to enforce collective farming was more bitter and terrible than the struggle with Hitler's Germany in the second World War. Stalin's excuse for his cruelty, that collective farming was a higher form of agriculture, is completely phony. Today, almost fifty years after the establishment of the Soviet regime, the Soviet Union is only saved from hunger, if not outright starvation, by repeated big purchases of grain from the individualist farmers of the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Similar Results from Red China's Agrarian Reform Measures

There have been equally appalling results, in terms of human death and sufferings, from the attempts of the communist rulers of China to impose extreme forms of communism on the peasants of that much suffering land. Again,

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even greater suffering has only been averted because the Chinese Reds have diverted a considerable portion of their scarce foreign currency to purchases of wheat from capitalist countries.

State economic planning has its farcical as well as its tragic sides. For a long time the merit of a Soviet plant was evaluated by its quantity output, with no regard for quality or salability. Khrushchev himself, before his downfall, reported one result of this method. Plants manufacturing chandeliers made them so heavy that they broke down the ceilings to which they were attached.

This is why one of the most important news stories coming out of the Soviet Union and its satellite communist-ruled countries is the fumbling, bumbling effort to achieve, within a general communist framework of political dictatorship and economic collectivism, some of the benefits of a market pricing system. These experiments are certain to fall short of their goals. For the dynamo of the free economy is the element of private ownership and the chain reaction of motivations and incentives which it releases. No such chain reaction can take place under a system where ultimate authority rests in the hands of anonymous groups of faceless bureaucrats.

Government Planning in Britain

What of the possibilities of state economic planning in countries where the peoples enjoy political and civil liberties, where most of the economy is in private hands? In such cases the objection is not that planning may lead to the ghastly horrors of the Soviet Union and Red China. It is that the whole attempt to plan an economy that is not completely under government control is certain to turn out as a pretty futile experiment in patchy guesswork. Take the recently published British National Plan, a document of 492 pages with impressive tables and charts.

This document assumes that, by 1970, British output will grow by 25 per cent, the take-off point being the beginning of 1965, and the average projected rate of growth per annum 3.8 per cent. Exports are supposed to rise by 5¼ per cent and imports by 4 per cent, the former rising and the latter falling from previous levels so as to take care of the embarrassing deficit in the balance of international payments which has been a root cause of the periodic spasms of international distrust in the stability of the pound sterling in foreign exchange. There are similar assumptions about wages, incomes and productivity, and supply of labor.

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Unpredictable Possibilities

What planners overlook is that economic trends are determined by a multitude of factors which the most technically competent forecaster cannot reasonably hope to anticipate. A "breakthrough" new invention, for instance, may divert investment and labor into some entirely new direction. The course of production and international trade is dependent on the feelings and reactions of enormous numbers of individuals, which defy any attempt to plot accurately on a neat diagram.

Who knows, for instance, how the bankers of Zürich ("gnomes" in the derogatory language of a British Labor Minister) and of other international financial centers may react to some British financial or legislative measure, with the result that the pound may be subjected to new pressure? Who can be sure that the habitually independent British trade unions will abide by government pleas to keep wage increases within a range of 3 to 4 per cent or that, even if the unions are compliant, they will not be bypassed by wildcat "unofficial" strikes? Should developments in this field turn out unfavorably, all the calculations of the Plan would be out of the window.

And where is the proof that imports, which have been rising at the rate of 5 per cent for the last ten years, will shrink to 4 per cent while exports, which have been going up 3 per cent a year during the previous decade, will go up by 5¼ per cent? The trends in foreign trade depend on factors outside the control of the planners: whether British goods will meet the competitive requirements of foreign customers, for instance. In the same way, the rising volume of imports is partly accounted for by the failure of British manufacturers, in some cases, to produce goods of the quality and desirability of those manufactured abroad. Can the planners guarantee that this situation will change? Of course, imports can be throttled by quotas and other forms of direct controls. But such procedure is apt to be a boomerang, inviting reprisals and leading to a decrease in the volume of foreign trade.

Maldistribution of Capital

Another serious defect of state planning, if it is taken seriously, is its tendency to divert long-term capital investment to the wrong places.

During the last decade, for instance, the figure of 200 million tons of output annually proved too high for coal. On the other hand, there was a big unforeseen demand for more gas. Had a "Na-

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tional Plan" been in effect, the result would most probably have been overinvestment in coal, underinvestment in gas. Writing in the weekly, *The Spectator*, a British commentator, Mr. John Brunner, asks some pointed questions and cuts the significance of the National Plan, hailed by some socialist enthusiasts as a panacea for all Britain's ills, down to size as follows:

"Is all this figuring supposed to enumerate what we *can* achieve by 1970, or what we *will* achieve, or what we *should* achieve? At different moments the Plan appears to be subscribing to all three interpretations, but the three are really quite incompatible... The National Plan is therefore in essence neither a serious measure of potential nor a genuine forecast of future developments but a political manifesto, a blueprint of what the government feels ought to be done. . . .

"Have we really reached such a pass that we are no longer capable of taking any action in this country without reference to a more or less illusory picture of the future? The craving for certainty is no doubt something deeply human . . . . and the popular papers have long ago learned to exploit it with their horoscopes. Is it really necessary for the government to indulge us further and do so moreover in a thoroughly ambiguous manner?"

The Ironical Twist

It is indeed ironical that, just when the communist governments of the Soviet Union and the East European states are groping around, so far without much success, in an effort to correct the errors and inadequacies of their planned economies by injecting some artificial imitations of the free market and pricing system (but without the vital dynamo of private ownership) Western democratic countries such as Great Britain and France are succumbing to the delusive opiate of planning. It would be good if more attention were paid to this grave admonition of Adam Smith:

> The statesman who should attempt to direct private people in what manner they ought to employ their capitals would not only load himself with a most unnecessary attention, but assume an authority which could safely be trusted to no council and senate whatever, and which would nowhere be so dangerous as in the hands of a man who had folly and presumption enough to fancy himself fit to exercise it.

Compulsive planning, as Russia and China show, leads to tragedy; permissive central planning, to futility. ◈

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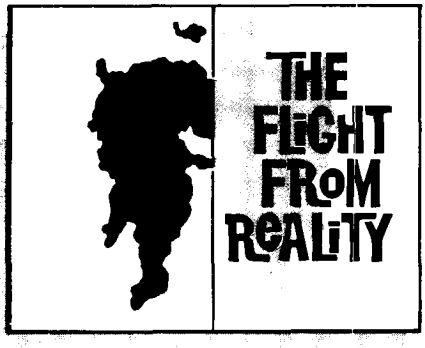

16. From Ideology to Mythology I

CLARENCE B. CARSON

THE STUDY of the history of ideas has produced some interesting results. Among these is the conclusion that at any given time in a society there is apt to be a prevailing set of ideas. These are not, of course, readily apparent to the superficial observer, not even to the superficial historian. Superficially, it is the disagreements among men, their debates, the points over which they contend that catch the attention. But beneath these there are often broad and fundamental areas of agreement in terms of which discourse takes place and disputed questions are settled, or compromises are worked out.

These broad areas of agreement which constitute the prevailing ideas have been called by a variety of names: *weltanschaung* (world outlook), frame of reference, basic premises, ethos, underlying philosophy, and so on. Historians can often discern that this ethos (or whatever name it should be called) is reflected and articulated in the arts, literature, politics, religion, morals, and institutions of a people. Periods in history have now quite often been given names which are meant to signify the prevailing ethos at that time: the Age of the Renaissance, the Age of the Baroque, the Age of the Enlightenment, and so on.

Such classifications should be accepted, however, with some reservations. The extent of agreement, even upon fundamental premises, can be easily exaggerated. Neat

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classifications appeal more to those who have only a passing acquaintance with an "Age" than those who have studied it deeply. Dissent from the prevailing ethos can be uncovered at almost any point in history. There is a tendency, too, to exaggerate the extent of the change from one of these periods to the other. There is a continuity in the basic ideas and beliefs of Western Civilization which cuts across the periods which historians define. Also, there is a relativism implied in many of these accounts of changing world outlooks which should be entertained cautiously. Prevailing ideas do change, to greater or lesser extent, from epoch to epoch, but this does not mean that one set of ideas is as good as another or that truth is relative to the premises of a given age. The results of logical deductions *are* relative to the premises from which they are deduced. Their truth content, however, depends upon the validity of the premises, that is, upon their conformity to reality.

The Age of Meliorism

With these reservations in mind, let it be asserted again that at a given time in society there is usually a prevailing ethos. This work has to do with such an ethos. Now, according to the unconventional wisdom of our age—that is, according to the uninhibited imaginations of a goodly number of would-be seers — we live in an Age of Transition. Indeed, it is often held that we have been in the slough of this transition for some time. At best, such a nonclassifying classification is a convenient dodge. It certainly avoids coming to terms with the ethos of our time, with describing it, with classifying it, and with holding it up for examination. Moreover, it is not a classification that can be validated with evidence. True, there can be assembled evidence that changes are occurring. But such evidence exists for all times for which there is any evidence. In short, to call an epoch an age of transition does not distinguish it, or classify it, from any other age.

We may indeed hope that much of the contemporary ethos may be transitory; it has certainly focused upon the ephemeral. But when the presently prevailing ethos has passed from the scene, its passing will not mark the end of an Age of Transition. For this ethos has a distinctive character. Moreover, it has been with us for a sufficient time to enable us to classify it with confidence. Ours is an AGE OF MELIORISM. The prevailing ethos supports continuous reform with the ostensible aim of improvement.

For seventy or eighty years this ethos has been building. The men

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whose thought is reckoned to be so influential upon our times have been meliorists: Edward Bellamy, Lester Frank Ward, John Dewey, William James, Thorstein Veblen, Charles A. Beard, Louis D. Brandeis, Woodrow Wilson, Walter Lippmann, Herbert Croly, and so on. The words which connote approval in our society are quite often those conducive to the reform effort: e. g., innovative, inventive, imaginative, progressive, creative, cooperative, flexible, pragmatic, open-minded, and involved. The arts, literature, religion, social thought, and education are permeated with the innovative and reformist spirit. There exists a bountiful literature describing the need for amelioration and containing proposals for collective effort to bring it about.

Ideological Origins

This work, thus far, has been an attempt to describe the historical development of this ethos and its propagation in American society. The story has been traced from the breakdown of philosophy to the birth of ideology to utopianism through the elaboration of a new conception of reality and creativity to some of the ways that meliorism (or socialism) was made attractive to Americans. In the final analysis, Americans generally began to accept the programs and policies of melioristic reform as they began to view things from a new ethos, a new outlook, a new frame of reference, or from a different set of fundamental premises. Men were drawn into this framework in a variety of ways: by being told that it was democratic, that it was an extension of that to which they were already devoted; by an appeal to concern for others; by having the programs of education for the young instrumented to this new way of looking at things which, when accepted, constituted a new frame of reference.

The intellectual sources of this melioristic frame of reference are in various ideologies. Nineteenth century thought has been categorized, at least once, by the phrase, the Age of Ideology. Certainly, ideologies abounded in the nineteenth century. All thought tended toward the formation of ideologies. This tendency was mirrored in the language which came to be used to describe the products of thought. The attachment of the "ism" suffix indicates the ideological tendency of the system of ideas to which it refers. This formation of words became epidemic in the first half of the nineteenth century. As one history book points out, "So far as is known the word 'liberalism' first appeared in the English language in 1819, 'radicalism' in 1820, 'socialism' in 1832, 'conservatism' in

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1835. The 1830's first saw 'individualism,' 'constitutionalism,' 'humanitarianism,' and 'monarchism.' 'Nationalism' and 'communism' date from the 1840's. Not until the 1850's did the English-speaking world use the word 'capitalism' . . ."[1] Many others were to follow: "romanticism," "Marxism," "Darwinism," "scientism," and so on. Some of these concepts with the suffix "ism" were not ideologies, properly speaking, but the tendency to attach the "ism" to all concepts and beliefs reflects the ideological propensities of thinkers.

Tangled in Abstractions

A great variety of ideologies developed in the wake of the breakdown of philosophy in the nineteenth century, and some even began to appear earlier. Rousseau propounded a democratist ideology, Bentham and the utilitarians an economicist ideology, Comte a sociologist (or socialist) ideology, Hegel a statist ideology, Marx a materialistic and historicist ideology, Mill an ideology of liberty, Spencer an evolutionist ideology, George a neo-physiocratic ideology, and so on.

Technically, an ideology is a system or complex of ideas which purports to comprehend reality. Actually, modern ideologies have usually been both more limited than this would suggest and much more zealously attached to by their proponents. The makers of ideologies have usually operated in some such fashion as the following. They quest for and think they have found the philosopher's stone, a magic key that will unlock the mysteries of the universe. It is some abstraction from the whole of reality. For Rousseau it was the general will, for Comte the stages of the development of the mind, for Hegel the conflict of ideas, for Marx the class struggle, for Spencer it was the evolutionary process, for Mill something called liberty, for George the unearned increment on land, for Bentham social utility, and so on. With the philosopher's stone in hand, the ideologue proceeds to spin out – to reason abstractly – an account of how things got the way they are, what is wrong with the way things are, and what is to be done about them, if anything.

The ideological version of reality is at considerable variance with existent reality. This is understandable, for the ideologue has not only proceeded by reducing it to abstractions – which are always less than and different from the reality to which they refer – but also hung all his abstractions upon

[1] R. R. Palmer with Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958, 2nd edition), p. 431.

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some central abstractions. If he concludes, as he seems invariably to do, that things should be brought into accord with his ideological version of them, he becomes a reformer. Indeed, all that does not accord with his version is irrational (and those who oppose it, anti-intellectual), for he has reached his conclusions logically, that is, by abstract reason. It is as if an inventor should construct an automaton on the basis of his analysis of actual men and then proclaim that all men should be like his mechanical figure. Utopias are just such parodies of the possibilities of reality, and are no more desirable than men would be if turned into mechanical contraptions.

The ideologue tends to fanaticism. Whatever it is that he thinks will set things aright – that is, bring them into accord with his mental picture of them – becomes for him a fixed idea. This fixed idea may be democracy, equality, the triumph of the proletariat, the coming of the kingdom, the single tax, the realization of an idea for society, or whatever his panacea happens to be. Come the proletarian revolution, one will say, and the good society will be ushered in. Employ creatively his abstraction, the "state," another will hold, and a great and productive social unity will emerge. Extend democratic participation into every area of life, and life will be glorious. Abolish property, abolish government, single tax the land, redistribute the wealth, maintain racial solidarity, organize interest groups, form a world government, develop an all embracing commitment to the nation, use government to make men free, and so on through the almost endless number of enthusiasms which have animated those under the sway of some ideology or other. The totalitarianisms they create when they try to put these ideas into effect stem from the total commitment to a fixed idea, an abstraction, in the first place.

Forgotten Influences

Meliorism has drawn such intellectual substance as it has had in America from these nineteenth century ideas. It drew sustenance from democratism, from egalitarianism, from nationalism, from utopian socialism, from Darwinism, from Marxism, and from statism. But the attempt to reconstruct society has not usually been advanced by the avowal of an explicit ideology. After the early years of the twentieth century, American intellectuals began to avoid ideological labels for the most part, even as more and more of them were influenced by ideas drawn from ideologies. Even those who thought of themselves as so-

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cialists became less and less definitely aligned with an explicit socialist ideology. There has been considerable talk lately of an end to ideology; a book has been written on that theme. And yet, the pressure toward melioristic reform continues to mount, and the arguments for reform and the direction that it takes is still drawn from ideology.

In general, American reformers, those who have gone by the name of "liberal" for a good many years now, have no consistently explicit ideology. Certainly, the generality of Americans who have come to expect and favor reforms are unaware of holding any ideology. What has happened is that many of the ideological assumptions that propel us toward melioristic reform have become a part of the mental baggage of most people. They have taken on a frame of reference, a way of looking at things, which makes increasing governmental activity seem natural to them.

Myths and Images

How did this come about? In the main, ideology was subsumed into mythology. People pick up the ideology through the myths which they have come to accept. A mythology is a body of myths or legends which purports to account for the way things are. In traditional usage a mythology is a kind of sacred history for a pagan religion. It contains the stories of the doings of the deities, and is a means of inculcating religious teachings. In the common parlance, a myth is a commonly believed view of something that is not true to fact, that will not stand up under careful scrutiny. However, some contemporary scholars use the word in a much more neutral and descriptive manner. The following definition tells what anthropologists are apt to mean when they refer to myths:

> Myths are the instruments by which we continually struggle to make our experience intelligible to ourselves. A myth is a large, controlling image that gives philosophical meaning to the facts of ordinary life; that is, which has organizing value for experience. A mythology is a more or less articulated body of such images, a pantheon. . . . This is not to say that sound myths of general application necessarily support religions; rather that they perform the historical functions of religion—they unify experience in a way that is satisfactory to the whole culture and to the whole personality.[2]

Another writer, thinking along the same lines, defines mythology in this way:

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[2] Mark Schorer, "The Necessity of Myth," *Myth and Mythmaking*, Henry A. Murray, ed. (New York: George Braziller, 1960), p. 355.

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Briefly stated, what I have in mind are first, the images (imagined scenes or objects) and *imagents* (imagined actions or events) underlying, sustaining, and activating some conceptually represented, developmental philosophy of life, or ideology, individual and social, and second, more particularly, a large assemblage of narratives in prose or poetry, each illustrative of a better or worse course of action, a better or worse state of being, or a better or worse mode of becoming, for an individual, for a society, or for the world at large.[3]

Psychological Justifications

It is symptomatic of the contemporary state of mind that elaborate and serious studies of mythology should be made, tricked out in the paraphernalia of scholarship. It is one more indicator of the loss of confidence in our culture, for to many such intellectuals all beliefs are inculcated by myths, and all myths stand more or less equal in their sight. The test of an adequate mythology, one gathers, is the extent to which it is psychologically satisfying. Note, too, that such studies tend to justify myths, just as William James justified religion, on psychological grounds. Their truth or falsity is not to be objectively determined; they are useful and appropriate, in general, if they satisfy the individuals in a given society.

Even so, it is these latter usages of "mythology" to which I refer when I say that ideology has been subsumed in mythology. There are some differences, however. It is assumed, in the above, that the stories and legends by which myths were purveyed were imaginary. This is not the case, at least generally, with the twentieth century mythology which propels us toward ameliorative reform. The stories and legends are quite often as accurate factually as modern research can make them. At any rate, the details are factual, or are supposed to be. Their mythical character is most profoundly to be found in the assumptions which are provided from ideology.

This modern mythology, the mythology of meliorism, is purveyed as history. That is, it is what people understand to have happened in the past, though it is most revelant to what is now happening and the trends presently at work. This does not mean that it is only something taught in the schools from history books. On the contrary, it has been purveyed in popular nonfiction, in imaginative literature, in newspapers and magazines. The mythology is evoked in political speeches, in

[3] Henry A. Murray, "The Possible Nature of a 'Mythology' to Come," in *Ibid.*, p. 300.

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sermons, in newscasts, in lectures, and in all of the ways that people communicate with one another. That is to say, it is a part of the way people see, interpret, and understand (or misunderstand) what is going on.

A Century's Distortion

The basic mythology concerns American history from about the time of the Civil War to the present. The myths can be found in almost any textbook on the subject. The following is a bareboned summary, hopefully not a parody, of some of the central myths found in such accounts. America was plunged into crisis in the latter part of the nineteenth century. This crisis portended catastrophe if something were not done. The signs of the crisis were all around: industrial depressions, increasing tenant farming, the growth of slums and tenements, periods of unemployment, labor strife, falling industrial wages, falling agricultural prices, the decline of craftsmanship, and generally worsening conditions. The sources of the crisis, according to the mythology, were to be found in profound underlying changes that were taking place. These changes are evoked by such words as industrialization, mechanization, urbanization, and, perhaps, proletarianization. Fundamentally, rapid changes in technology, and the manner of its utilization, were producing vast maladjustments in society.

These changes called for fundamental alterations in attitudes, in social institutions, and in the patterns of behavior of a people. Instead of this having taken place, however, older American patterns had been extended and had ossified. Individualism had become rugged individualism, economic liberty become license to plunder the resources of America for private aggrandizement, the government of the people an instrument for advancing the fortunes of a nascent plutocracy. Vernon Louis Parrington, no mean mythmaker himself, describes the development this way:

> The war . . . had opened to capitalism its first clear view of the Promised Land. The bankers had come into control of the liquid wealth of the nation, and the industrialists had learned to use the machine for production; the time was ripe for exploitation on a scale undreamed-of a generation before. . . .
>
> It was an abundant harvest of those freedoms that America had long been struggling to achieve, and it was making ready ground for later harvests that would be less to its liking. Freedom had become individualism, and individualism had become the inalienable right to preempt, to exploit, to squander. . . .

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In such fashion the excellent ideal of progress that issued from the social enthusiasms of the Enlightenment was taken in charge by the Gilded Age and transformed into a handmaid of capitalism. Its duties were narrowed to the single end of serving profits and its accomplishments came to be exactly measured by bank clearings. . . .

Having thus thrown the mantle of progress about the Gold Dust twins, the Gilded Age was ready to bring the political forces of America into harmony with the program of preemption and exploitation. . . .[4]

In consequence of these things, according to the mythology, the rich were getting richer and the poor were getting poorer. Farmers were oppressed by high and discriminatory rail rates, and workers were being exploited by robber barons. The wealth of America was being channeled into the hands of a few beneficiaries of special privilege by both government action and inaction. Farmers were muttering, becoming angry, beginning to organize. Workers were feeling the pinch of deprivation, becoming increasingly discontented, and beginning to organize. These clouds upon the horizon surely portended a coming storm.

[4] Vernon L. Parrington, *The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America:* 1860-1920 (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1930, 1958), pp. 8-19.

Let the Problem Fit the Answer

The solution to the problem is usually carried implicitly within the mythology. Fundamental adjustments must be made in keeping with the changed condition. The power of the people collectively, that is, government, must be used to tame these forces let loose in the land, to restore balance and harmony, to bring about an adjustment. But, as everyone who is familiar with the mythology knows, the cavalry did not come dashing to the rescue, or, to be literal, the government did not act forcefully to bring about this harmony in the late nineteenth century. True, it did begin to tinker, to prohibit trusts and regulate ineffectively the railroads, to allot a few crumbs of the governmental bounty by way of inflation to the poor and dispossessed. But these were puny efforts beside the massive transformation called for by these forces at work in society.

Things did begin to look up in the early twentieth century, according to the legend. Reformers began to be heard in the land; politicians began to advance some of their programs; even Presidents began to use the language of reform. Local governments, state governments, and even the United States government began to make faltering efforts at more comprehensive reforms. But alas, the ef-

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fort was shortlived; the advance gave way to retreat once more in the 1920's. Business returned to the saddle once more; the roaring twenties witnessed the last fling of a moribund capitalism. The public was drawn into this Roman holiday, spending its substance in riotous living or engaging in the speculative boom occurring on the stock market.

The Great Depression

The long expected catastrophe finally came — the Great Depression. As fate would have it, the country was saddled with the last of the rugged individualists, Herbert Hoover, when the day of accounting arrived, and he fiddled with puny ameliorative efforts while Rome burned. The situation went from bad to worse. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., himself a mythmaker of the first order, describes conditions on the day of the first inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt:

> The fog of despair hung over the land. One out of every four American workers lacked a job. Factories that had once darkened the skies with smoke stood ghostly and silent, like extinct volcanoes. Families slept in tarpaper shacks and tinlined caves and scavenged like dogs for food in the city dump. In October the New York City Health Department had reported that over one-fifth of the pupils in public schools were suffering from malnutrition. Thousands of vagabond children were roaming the land, wild boys of the road. Hunger marchers, pinched and bitter, were parading cold streets in New York and Chicago. On the countryside unrest had already flared into violence. . . .[5]

Following Roosevelt's inaugural address, of course, "across the land the fog began to lift."[6]

Whether the fog lifted or not (some think it settled permanently upon Washington), government intervention was certainly undertaken in earnest thereafter. According to the legend, government took up its proper role in affairs. It began to tame the wayward and destructive forces let loose by industrialization, to bring order out of the economic chaos induced by an economy of private aggrandizement and cutthroat competition, to take sides among the citizenry to rectify the imbalance beween labor and management and between agriculture and industry. The United States government undertook planning, regulating, controlling, subsidizing, inflating, harnessing, spending, and taxing with a right good will. Of course, it took some time for those in government to learn just how to man-

[5] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Crisis of the Old Order*, 1919-1933 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 3.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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age all these things in the best possible way. Some relics of the depression remained throughout the 1930's, and it was only after the outbreak of the war that full prosperity was finally restored. But the right direction had been taken, so the mythology goes. Government has now mastered most of the economic forces which once wrought such hardship in the land: that is, depression, unemployment (well, not quite!), destructive competition, hoarding (of money), and so on. There remain problems, of course, and the process of reform must go on, but the basically right direction has now been taken. The great progress that has been made in the last thirty years should be attributed to this governmental activity.

And How It Was Cured!

Government intervention, then, has produced great and lasting good. One will rarely find a dissenting voice about this in textbooks. On the other hand, it has done little if any demonstrable harm. This summary of the mythology can be closed with a quotation to this effect from one of the most consistent mythologizers of this generation, Senator Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania:

> That nightmare of "federal control" which haunts the dreams of our conservative friends is an hallucination. I cannot think of one example of the "heavy hand of the federal government reaching out into our private lives" that has actually been restrictive of our personal freedoms or detrimental to our economy. . . .
>
> The federal government has been subsidizing education in this country ever since the Northwest Ordinance of 1784 [sic]. No harm and much good have resulted. The same is true of social security, housing, urban renewal, and government plans for the health care for the aged.[7]

There is enough truth in this account to make it superficially plausible. Men can thrust their experiences into this framework, and it will seem to make sense of them. After all, two generations of publicists and researchers have collected mountains of facts with which to buttress the mythology. In like manner, two generations of interpreters have woven these facts into smooth and plausible accounts of what has been and is happening. Nor is there any reason to suppose that many of them have any doubts about the correctness of their interpretations. For aught we know, the deluders are deluded by their own delusions.

Be that as it may, the above

[7] In Edward Reed, ed., *Challenges to Democracy: The Next Ten Years* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 102.

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summary is of a full-fledged mythology, believed and accepted by millions of Americans, so far as judgments of such things can be made. To perceive its mythical character, it will be helpful to examine some of the myths that go to make it up, and to see how they took shape. Such an examination will be forthcoming. ◈

The next article in this series will further cover "From Ideology to Mythology."

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An Editorial from *The Journal of Commerce*:

THE SERPENTINE GAUNTLET

ANYONE who has followed the serpentine twists of this year's sugar bill through the House and on into the dungeon of the Senate Finance Committee knows that the visible signs of its progress—if it can be called progress – were not very pretty.

Its path was less a path than a gauntlet strewn with ambuscades. At every turn in the marble corridors, in every committee room where it was detained, little knots of determined men were lying in wait, each with a sheaf of amendments plus hammers and nails with which to affix them to a measure that looked stranger and stranger until it literally fell asunder and broke up into three or more entities that could not at this point be reassembled by all

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the king's horses or all the king's men.

There is the original Administration bill, with its country-by-country allocations on the basis of deliveries during the critical supply periods of 1963-64. There is the House-passed bill that uses the allocation formula of the 1962 Sugar Act which favors Western Hemisphere sources. There are the proposals of Senators Fulbright and Williams for a simple six-month extension. Separate plans have been advanced by Senator Douglas, who wants an import fee, by Senator Morton, who feels that even the House bill does not sufficiently favor Latin American producers, and by Senator McCarthy, who wants import quotas based on actual deliveries from 1960 to 1964.

Many, including this newspaper, have deplored the machinations of lobbyists representing all kinds of domestic and foreign interests in confounding the issues involved in the sugar bill. Beet and cane growers are feuding as usual. Foreign suppliers are feuding with each other. Foreign policy and domestic farm policies are colliding at every step of the way. And so it goes.

Nevertheless, it is not only unfair but a little aside from the point to blame all this shoving and pushing on the lobbyists. These, after all, merely represent American and foreign business interests and a sizable number of foreign governments whose futures are deeply involved with every twist and turn of American sugar policy. If there are some who take advantage of this confusion for reasons that strike a number of critics as "crass," there are others who rightly feel their very livelihood is at stake. They can hardly be blamed for fighting for it.

Who's to Blame?

Where, then, does the blame lie? We would say it lies, in the considerations that do with sugar, as with any other commodity, in the foolish conviction that the determinations of Congress are in some way beyond the ken of the average person — superior to an overriding degree to any decisions that could ever possibly be reached in the market place.

If sugar had been left untouched, its marketing today would be determined solely by the price established by supply and demand. If foreign producers of cane could market their sugar here at lower prices than domestic beet or cane producers, there would be no problem. There might be no domestic beet or cane producers, but neither would there be any problem of choosing between foreign pro-

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ducers. If, on the other hand, domestic producers could beat the foreign competition hands down, would there be any question as to which (if any) foreign producers should be favored?

It is only because Congress decided that it, and it alone, should be the supreme arbiter concerning the source and the price of every pound of sugar sold in the United States that this awful impasse came to pass. In such a circumstance, who can be surprised at learning that Congressmen are the target of each and every interest that can be brought to bear? In such a circumstance, who can be surprised at learning that the (almost) annual debate over the sugar bill evidences traces of the worst kind of logrolling that have disgraced democratic government in this country since the machinations leading up to the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act of 1930?

We admit – the editors of this newspaper – that some of our foreign friends and allies might suffer if sugar marketings here were determined solely by the laws of supply and demand, which is to say, by the laws of the market place. But who, after witnessing the deplorable results of Congressional horse-trading, could honestly say the market has in the slightest degree been improved by Federal intervention?

The fact is, it hasn't been improved in one single degree, or tenth of a degree. It would, today, prove far less chaotic if there had been no Federal intervention whatever. Let all liberals who believe in Federal marketing controls pause over this. Let them consider only sugar for the moment, but then consider how far down the road to ruin their follies have already led them. ◈

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Order

TO ORGANIZE ONE'S LIFE, to distribute one's time, to take the measure of one's duties and make one's rights respected; to employ one's capital and resources, one's talents and one's chances profitably – all this belongs to and is included in the word order. . . . Order is man's greatest need and his true well-being.

From the *Journal* of HENRI AMIEL (1821-81)

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Prosperity

Life is purposeful and creative action by individual creatures showing infinitely great ranges of variations in structures and capacities. The basic purpose of living action seems to be that of achieving greater *awareness* and *understanding* of the environment and increased *power* to organize it so as to make it more favorable to the preservation of higher forms of life. In such achievement we find the meaning of "welfare," "prosperity," and "progress" for every living thing including man.

For man, as for all forms of life, therefore, progress requires individuals to exert *effort* and to take the *risks* inherent in experiment and invention.

Dr. Watts is Chairman of the Division of Social Studies at Northwood Institute, a private college dedicated to the philosophy and practice of free enterprise. This article is from lecture material for his course: Survey of American Life and Business.

It follows that human welfare, prosperity, and progress do not consist in escape from stress and strain, nor in mere abundance of the means of subsistence or entertainment. Instead, welfare, prosperity, and progress correspond to the level of *creative activity* and the rate of achievement in discovering and developing new abilities and instruments for making the environment more hospitable to higher levels of living. Prosperity is pursuit of a flying goal. It is pursuit of abundance that escapes our grasp because human aspirations and capacities for achievements appear to know no bounds.

Responsibility

In man, however, creative action has reached a new stage of evolution. In the human being the life force has become *self-conscious, self-controlling,* and *self-directing.*

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AND FREE MARKETS A SUMMARY....

V. Orval Watts

The creature, man, can now help control and direct creation and humans progress only insofar as individuals become aware of this unique opportunity and take advantage of it. In other words, humans prosper and progress only as they become aware of their powers of choice, self-control, and self-direction, and as they learn to exercise these powers creatively.

This is what we mean by saying that the human individual must accept responsibility for his own acts. He must learn that he is responsible as the primary cause for what he does, and to survive and progress he must gain wisdom and take charge of the process of acquiring those habits we call "character," "virtue," "morality," and "personality."

Private Property

The first condition for this learning process and development is *private property*, or, more simply, *property*, for all true property is private. Individual appropriation of standing room and of the means of subsistence is necessary for mere existence, and individual appropriation of land and tools is equally necessary for anything more than mere existence, that is, for any degree of prosperity and progress. The prosperity and progress of every human society correspond to its members' respect for the right of the individual to own, control, and use land and the fruits of his labor, thrift, and enterprise in production and exchange.

This individual appropriation and responsibility for finding, devising, and employing the "means of production" (land, natural resources, tools, machines, and other forms of capital) is *capitalism*. It follows from *freedom* from violence and intimidation (threat of violence). Where such freedom, or

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peace, exists, individuals have property in what they find, produce, or obtain by voluntary gift or exchange.

Cooperation

Equally essential for human prosperity and progress is cooperation. Humans need one another. None is sufficient unto himself. One of the most critical problems of human progress, therefore, is to maintain and improve cooperation while individuals exercise and develop their powers of self-direction and invention. These powers are the most important of all qualities distinguishing humans from animals or beasts. They are the qualities which also make a human – at least potentially – far more useful than any domesticated animal or inanimate machine.

But the risks of depending on the cooperation of free persons correspond to the opportunities for progress. Fear of these risks – knowledge that our welfare and even our very lives depend on the work and service of other persons – tempts us to resort to violence or threat of violence to assure continued cooperation or to increase it or improve it. The result of such coercion, however, is increasing antagonism and conflict or irresponsibility and apathy, which reduce cooperation. We cannot get true cooperation by force or threat of force because humans are self-controlling and will exert their peculiarly human powers (e.g., initiative and inventiveness) only in pursuit of self-selected purposes.

In perfect freedom, or pure capitalism, an individual would try to get the help of his fellows only by offering in return an *inducement* – something which other persons want and which they do not have or do not have in sufficient abundance. This inducement might be merely expressions of gratitude. But since man does not live by gratitude or praise alone, inducements in capitalistic (free) societies include offers of relatively scarce and desirable services and commodities – *economic goods*. This is the Golden Rule as it applies in the business of making a living.

Markets

But how can an individual know what goods to produce in order to get what he wants from others who may be distant from him in space or tastes?

The answer is to be found in the operation of the market place. Exchange values – wages, interest rates, rents, profits, and losses –

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act as signals and incentives to producers. A relatively high price is more than a "trumpet call to production." It provides also an increased opportunity to those getting it to increase the supply of the relatively scarce service or commodity.

Money

For efficient marketing, or exchange, both money and credit are essential. *Money* is necessary as a measure of values and a medium of exchange. *Credit* is necessary whenever it takes time to complete an exchange.

In contrast with economic goods, money is useful only when scarce. Air and water are still useful even when they are so abundant that no one will pay anything to get more, but money becomes useless when everyone has all he wants of it. Gold would still have a use for filling teeth or for plating a man-made satellite if we had all we wanted of it, but it would no longer have use as money, because no one would give anything in exchange for it.

Credit

Credit and money are often confused with one another, but they are actually as different as day and night. Money is a means of payment, credit is only a promise to pay. It arises in connection with an incomplete exchange.

Except in the case of simple barter, it is seldom possible or economical to make a simultaneous and complete exchange of services between two persons or to complete payment at the same instant each unit of services is performed. Most exchanges in all societies except the most primitive take time to complete, and while incomplete, credit is given and received.

From the lender's standpoint, credit involves trust that the borrower (the person who gets goods or money on credit) will complete the exchange (pay later). From the borrower's standpoint, credit involves a promise to pay – a promise to complete the exchange at some future time by giving value in exchange for the goods or money presently received.

To repeat, credit arises in an *incomplete exchange.*

Credit Currency

The borrower may give the creditor a written promise to pay, but such records, or credit instruments, are not credit, and the number or face value of such instruments has only a loose and

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indirect relation to the volume of credit in actual use.

Neither are such instruments money even though they pass from one person to another in settlement of obligations. Circulating credit instruments, such as private bank notes or bank checks, are a form of *currency*, but they are promises to pay money rather than money itself. Their usefulness as a medium of exchange, or currency, depends on creditors' confidence in the maker's ability and willingness to pay the money promised when due or to deliver claims of equal value against other credit-worthy producers or property owners.

Gold Standard

When a debtor promises to pay in gold or some other commodity, he accepts the value of this commodity as the standard (measure) of value for his payment. He does not always or necessarily deliver the standard money (e.g., gold) in payment, but to avoid doing so and yet satisfy his creditors he must deliver goods or claims on goods which the creditor prefers to gold. This means that the debtor must price his goods (or those assets he liquidates in order to get the wherewithal to pay his debt) low enough so that buyers will prefer them to gold and give him gold *or its equivalent* for them.

In this way, a standard money, such as gold, exerts constant pressure on individuals to use credit productively and to keep their prices in line with the value of the standard. If the standard commodity, e.g., gold, becomes abundant and cheap, sellers may correspondingly raise their prices. But gold has become the generally accepted standard in free markets precisely because – although widely distributed in nature – it has not come on the market faster than the demand for it has increased, except for comparatively brief periods.

Banking

The specialists in credit (e.g., bankers, savings institutions, insurance and investment companies) record the values advanced as loans, or "credits," act as producers' agents in making advances and collections, and serve as clearing-houses for drafts, orders, and other forms of credit currency used as evidences of loans and payments, exchanges, and repayments.

Since a borrower commonly uses a credit from one producer (or from the financial agent of a pro-

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ducer, such as a bank) to make full and satisfactory payment to another producer, it is easy to confuse credit (especially bank credit) or the evidences of this credit (currency) with money, and to believe that the demand for goods and the supply of credit depends on the amount of borrowing and the spending of borrowed funds. In this limited view, the borrower is a public benefactor merely because he borrows, buys, and consumes. When this limited and fallacious view of credit and of credit currency dominates political policy, it leads to waste of productive resources and to statism (governmental restriction of freedom).

In freedom, the borrower is expected to repay the loan, and lenders who fail to collect payment suffer losses and find themselves correspondingly deprived of their credit and lending power. To repay the loan, however, the borrower must either reduce his later spending by the amount of the loan (in which case there is no net increase in demand or spending for goods), or he must produce and sell more goods to get the means of payment. Since lenders usually charge interest for their loans, thus requiring repayment of more than was originally loaned, borrowers have a corresponding incentive to use their borrowings to maintain their earning power or to increase it. Hence, in freedom, borrowers and lenders tend to use credit economically and productively.

We should note, too, that creditors and sellers of goods in free markets tend to reject or discount inferior currencies, i.e., currencies that are inferior in convenience and intrinsic worth. Consequently, *in freedom, good money drives out bad money.* Or, more precisely, among private currencies in free markets, more trustworthy and convenient forms of currency tend to replace inferior currencies.[1]

Fiat Money

Governments, and only governments, may declare certain credit instruments (usually government IOU's or the IOU's of banks controlled by government) to be full *legal tender.* This means that creditors can legally demand nothing better or more valuable in payment of debts owed to them. This legal-

[1] Since, so far as I know, this law is my own discovery, stated in my classes and public lectures nearly 20 years ago, friends have named it "Watts' Law of Money." Long study of banking and monetary history, as well as economic analysis, convinces me that it is a valid observation of an economic uniformity, or *law.* Therefore I am willing to accept responsibility for putting the statement of it into circulation.

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tender act by government transforms the credit instruments into "fiat money," or "paper money." The purpose of this act is commonly to increase the means for paying debts (including the government's own debts) and thus make them easier to pay. It thereby aids debtors at the expense of creditors.

It is to such legal tender money that Gresham's Law applies. Governments compel creditors to accept all legal tender money at face value. Yet they sometimes issue new kinds of money having less intrinsic worth than coins of the same stated legal tender value still in circulation. This was the case when the Tudor monarchs were debasing the coinage during the lifetime of Sir Thomas Gresham, London merchant and government financier. Gresham then noted (as Oresme and Copernicus had before him) that "bad money drives out good money." That is, debtors and buyers of goods make their payments in the money of less intrinsic worth, while they hoard, melt down or ship abroad the coins having greater intrinsic worth.[2]

[2] We have seen this verified in the United States for two years or more as paper dollars replaced silver dollars and half dollars in circulation, as wartime nickels of higher silver content disappeared from circulation, and now as the new "sandwich" quarters and dimes replace coins of much higher silver content.

Deficit Spending

When the fallacious view that borrowing *per se* is a public service prevails in politics, the government is likely to manufacture "lawful money" (legal-tender paper, or fiat money) to permit the borrower to avoid a cut in his future spending as he pays his debt. It may then issue paper money to lend or give to "needy," or "deserving," spenders, or to buy the products of favored producers regardless of the economic value or usefulness of these goods. Such policies waste labor and capital which might otherwise increase the supply of goods (and of credit) in the free markets, and they encourage unproductive borrowing and consumption of goods.

Furthermore, when government gets the authority to print legal-tender money, it is likely to use this easy method for increasing its own spending for political purposes, as, for example, for molding public opinion to support its expansion of power, for hiring police, spies, soldiers, and tax collectors to enforce its multiplying rules and levies, or for buying votes, wholesale or retail.

But as government thus expands its activities beyond those necessary to establish freedom (i.e., to suppress private coercion, such as

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banditry, assault, and stealing), it takes from individuals a corresponding amount of freedom to use their energies and capital according to their own best judgment. It thereby restricts their opportunity to develop their most important powers – those powers which most of all distinguish humans from animals; and so it restricts human progress. This encroachment of government on individual freedom is commonly called "statism."

Political constitutions are systems of rules by which freedom-seeking humans have tried to restrict government activities to those believed necessary for welfare. In this sense, the state and Federal constitutions of these United States were originally the most restrictive constitutions of which we have record, and until about 1898 they served as effective barriers to the advance of statism in this country. ◈

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Opportunities to "Do Good"

TOO MANY OF US get it into our heads that to "do good" we must go far outside our daily routine interests.

Glenn Frank once said: "The rich man's greatest opportunity for public service lies inside his private business. That is to say, statesmanship in business is of greater social value than philanthropy outside business."

A man with the genius for successfully running a business is right where he belongs; the opportunities to "do good" are greater in business than outside business.

WILLIAM FEATHER,
in *The William Feather Magazine*, July, 1965

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The Human Desire for Freedom

EDWARD Y. BREESE

SOME THIRTY years ago surveys of employee motivation were conducted in great depth by some pretty hard-headed personnel organizations, and the eventual results were published and widely studied in such magazines as *Fortune*.

To the surprise of everyone concerned, the primary goal of the employee, both clerical and industrial, was neither salary nor "security" but a sense of personal worth, of achievement in the job, and the desire to receive a fair deal and recognition from the employer.

Unless John Doe can see the chance of achievement in status and in accomplishment of something he feels to be important in the job, he is unhappy no matter what the rates of pay or the fringe benefits offered him.

No findings since these surveys were made in the thirties have in any way contradicted or superseded them.

In other words the typical man puts above anything else the need to feel that he is doing something worthwhile and that he can increase his skill and move forward by his own efforts. He is not foolish enough to believe that, under any system, everyone can become a millionaire. He does *need to know* that he can earn status and the recognition of his fellows in his own life and his own job.

It is just this sense of achievement which he cannot attain under any system except that of free competition and free enterprise. And it is for just this reason that

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man cannot fulfill himself as an individual within the termite hill of a totalitarian system.

This is the inescapable truth which dooms totalitarianism from the start. The seed of destruction lies within the Republic of Plato, the latifundia of slave-powered second-century Rome and eighteenth-century Brazil, the Russian Gosplan, the British modified socialism, and all other totalitarian efforts.

The socialist condemns the competitive activities of the men at the top of the human pyramid as a sort of "original sin" which is destined to destroy mankind. Success in competition and in achievement is condemned in terms of morality and with religious fervor.

Yet, no totalitarian regime has ever succeeded in destroying or even seriously limiting the activities of the sort of predatory competitor whom they all alike condemn. Under the socialist regime this fellow flourishes even more freely than before. He merely transfers his activities from private to public enterprise. As Joseph Wood Krutch observes in his *Essays on Man and Nature,*

> When men cannot compete for wealth they compete for position, for authority, for influence in the right places. When they cannot own a palace, four automobiles, and ten servants, they manage to get themselves appointed to jobs in connection with which these things are assigned them. More dreadfully still, when these same men find themselves no longer required to pay the common man to do their work for them, they quickly discover that when the profit motive has been abolished, the fear motive affords a very handy substitute.

Socialism, in fact, does nothing at all to hamper or eliminate the sort of competition against which it is continually preaching; it merely puts it on a dog-eat-dog basis.

What the totalitarian actually accomplishes is something very different from what he says he wants to do. It is the elimination of the opportunity for achievement from the lives of the generality of mankind, and this is, in very truth, a cardinal sin against the human spirit.

When the totalitarian removes from man his freedom of achievement within the framework of a free economy, he performs a spiritual amputation more deadly than the physical removal of an arm or a leg. Rather, he attempts such an amputation; for in fact, no essential component of humanity can ever actually be cut away.

The termite and the ant can live within the tight straitjacket of a controlled and regimented hive precisely because they are not hu-

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man. The need of achievement, which is the root and basis of all competitive activity, is lacking in the insect. But it is present in the man.

Without this need, the man is no longer a man. If it should be cut away, he would no longer live and exist as a man. The Haitian concept of the zombie suggests what would remain of man without his competitive drive to achieve something of value.

Seldom has the need to achieve been given as free a rein as in our own American economy from the founding of the first seaboard colonies through the second decade of the present century. And it was precisely within this period that the great American achievements were made.

The efforts to grow and to achieve by millions of individual Americans over the years were multiplied into national achievement in the free functioning of republican political institutions, the creation of a technology unmatched in history, and the building of a more prosperous society for a larger group of people than history had ever known.

Let us grant that the growth of America was favored and aided beyond measure by the environment within which it took place. There was an immense surplus of land, of raw material, and – in time – of labor and of capital. Yet, without the framework of the free economy established by the writers of the Declaration and the Constitution, there could not have been that added factor which made all the difference in the American achievement.

The greatest factor in our growth lay in the fact that for so many decades the ordinary American was free to grow and to achieve right up to the limits of his ability, and that *he knew he was free to do so.*

It is precisely this freedom and this knowledge of freedom that has to be destroyed if socialism and the monolithic state and controlled welfare economy are to endure.

Yet the hunger for this freedom is the one thing which can never be destroyed, because it is a deep-seated and essential part of the humanity of every man. It cannot be destroyed by brainwashing or sold for a mess of pottage. To cut it away would be like amputation of the head.

To awaken consciousness of this need in any man, it is only necessary to ask of him, "What do you really want in your life?" The totalitarian can never stop any man from asking himself this question. Because he *is* a man he must ask. And so long as he continues to ask, the totalitarian state can never prevail. ◈

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This Independent Republic

ROUSAS J. RUSHDOONY, who has been a pastor of two churches and a missionary among the the Paiute and Shoshone Indians, has been called to his greatest work as a writer who specializes in the intellectual, religious, and moral origins of the United States. The word "called" is used here advisedly, with full realization of its religious shading. For Dr. Rushdoony considers that constitutionalism, in the United States, is, as he puts it, "a form of covenantalism," with civil policy limited by antecedent considerations of the "rights of Englishmen" which had been established in feudal Britain under the religious dispensation of the Christian church. He speaks always in terms of a higher law to which positive law must conform if our nation is to continue to observe its Burkean contract with its traditional past.

The Rushdoony way of thinking is becoming increasingly quaint in the age of collectivism, and his searching book, *This Independent Republic* (The Craig Press, $3.95), must mystify a generation that has been nurtured on the pure majoritarianism that is preached by James MacGregor Burns, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and other historians who care little for the rights of individuals as citizens of the separate covenanting states. In a way, the chapters of *This Independent Republic* consist of pellets thrown into the teeth of a howling gale. The U.S. Supreme Court no longer thinks of law and sovereignty in Rushdoony terms; it has turned against the covenanting states and told them how they must apportion the representation in their own local legislatures, and it has long since repudiated the idea that there can be such a thing as real intrastate commerce. The public, whether through apathy or fear, has gone along with the superimposed idea that no rights are sacrosanct against the decision of "one man, one vote." Hence Rushdoony, and those who believe with

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him, must think of themselves as a "remnant."

Whether this remnant can be a "saving remnant," or a "happy few," is an interesting question as the Great Society carries on its work of blotting out the small Burkean platoons. But there is no virtue in trying to be with history when history itself is riding to a fall. The Rushdoony hope must be that some of the pellets thrown into the wind will be picked up and used once the gale has blown itself out.

A Contract Broken by King George III

Picking up one pellet and unwrapping it, the man of the future will have to consider Dr. Rushdoony's amplification of Peter F. Drucker's contention that the American Revolution was, in actuality, a counterrevolution against King George III's assumption of the arbitrary power of "the king in parliament" over colonials who had never relinquished their rights as Englishmen. It was King George III who broke the contract, not George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. Drucker, in his own now-forgotten book, *The Future of Industrial Man*, recalled the wide development of freedom in the Middle Ages, when the king was bound by his own feudal duties as "first among equals" in a society in which the basic structure of society was the local land unit. It wasn't until after the big emigrations from England to America that the British parliament ceased to be what Rushdoony refers to as "a nonstatist feudal body, a court of contract and law between king and vassals" in which "representation was based on feudal classes," Since they were never consulted in the shift that made parliament over into "a statist body, exercising divine right," the colonists were merely holding to their own inheritance when they proclaimed their independence of King George III's government of usurpers.

Tenth Amendment Voided

Rushdoony's description of America as the land of "covenanters" assumes that the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution has never been repealed. Only specified powers were delegated to the Federal government by the contracting states in 1787. But what is the actual status of the Tenth Amendment today? According to this amendment, Federal intervention in the self-government of states – and, "by implication, of their constituent units, the counties" – is forbidden. Alas, a vaguely worded clause of the Fourteenth Amendment has been

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stretched totally out of its context by modern Supreme Court justices to nullify the Tenth Amendment, which the formulators of the Fourteenth Amendment had no intention of repealing. The "covenant" of 1787 has been broken as arbitrarily as the covenants between the colonists and the British government were shattered by King George III way back in the seventeen seventies.

Areas of Intervention

So we have arbitrary government by Federal intervention. Dr. Rushdoony is unblinking in his recital of the scope of this intervention. In economics, the Federal welfare economy presumes to tell individuals what and where they may plant; where funds must be channelled to rehabilitate "depressed areas"; how much a marginal laborer must be paid; who shall hire whom; in what manner the right to free speech shall be fettered if your radio or TV company has been allotted a wave length; and so forth and so on (the list could be extended almost indefinitely).

Foreign policy, under the Constitution, is left to the President acting with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. But the Constitution did not give Presidents the right to employ huge armies. Dr. Rushdoony insists that Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution makes universal military conscription possible for "the stated purposes only," which are "(1) to execute the laws of the Union, (2) to suppress insurrections, and (3) to repel invasions." This means that "conscripted men . . . could not be used in foreign wars." Well, they have been so used in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the present war in South Vietnam. I personally happen to think we are fighting a just war in Southeast Asia, but the Rushdoony interpretation of Article I, Section 8, makes the point that men can be illegally conscripted to fight in even the most justified crusades.

In the matter of money, the Constitution imposes restrictions on the states as well as on the Federal union. Yet modern banks effectively "coin" paper money in a way that would have horrified Andrew Jackson or even Alexander Hamilton. The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution says that "no person shall be . . . deprived of property . . . without due process of law" and "nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." Yet urban renewal consistently takes property from some for the profit of others, which is hardly consistent with the qualification about "just compensation."

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Modern Trends Based on Changes in Underlying Faiths

Dr. Rushdoony notes that the wide ramifications of Federal intervention mean that "we are less and less under the Constitution and increasingly under the Supreme Court." But he does not particularly blame the Court for this state of affairs. The trend, he says, is a cultural phenomenon, and its origins are religious. The eighteenth century meanings of words have changed because our informing faith has changed. We have lost our old character. We produce short-sighted Supreme Court justices because we fail, in the first instance, to educate potential judges as men.

It is hard to visualize a Great Societarian reading *This Independent Republic.* The very concepts would be alien to him. He would not grasp your meaning if you tried to tell him that 1776 represented a "conservative counter-revolution." Law, today, is anything that 51 per cent of the people want to impose on 49 per cent. It's "one man, one vote." So it was for a moment in Hitler's Germany; so it has been in some of the modern African states. But (see the Ghana of Nkrumah) "one man, one vote" can easily turn into "one man, one vote, *once.*" The italics would meet with Dr. Rushdoony's approval. ◈

▶ HENRY DAVID THOREAU by Joseph Wood Krutch (New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1965), 298 pp. $1.95.

Reviewed by Robert M. Thornton

ALBERT JAY NOCK once remarked that Thoreau is a man to *know,* not merely to know *about.* Mr. Krutch agrees, for his study is not just a collection of biographical data; it helps us understand the uniqueness of the man who wrote *Walden.*

Everyone knows that Thoreau lived in a shack by a pond. "He knew quite specifically how he wanted to live," writes Krutch, "and what he wanted to live for; he was also sure that his discoveries had general relevance – not that everybody should live as he did but that each should go about the solution of his own particular problem in the same radical way." In seeking the solitude of Walden Pond Thoreau "was not merely running away from human society but attempting to run forward into something, and it was not a sense of emptiness but a sense of richness which his solitude brought him."

Thoreau is renowned as a lover of nature; but Krutch, himself one of the breed, explains that this does not mean going out to view nature as one visits an art gallery. Rather, Thoreau wished

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to become, in a sense, one with nature instead of being an intruder as are most men; his approach to nature was that of the poet.

Thoreau has two chunks of wisdom for those of us living a century after his death. His most fundamental injunction was "simplify, simplify," and this is especially urgent in an age when trivialities occupy so much of our time and energy. In our eagerness to "go places" and "do things" we do not truly live but rather go *through* life, gaining the whole world, perhaps, but losing our souls.

Secondly, there is Thoreau's contempt for group action, his rejection of mass movements as a cure for the ills of the world. As Mr. Krutch explains, the great question of our day is whether man is a responsible being or a mere product of the environment. Whenever the latter answer prevails, we seek to change the system, believing that improved social machinery will produce better men. Thoreau disagreed; he accepted responsibility for himself. He saw no reason to postpone life while waiting for a new world, but sought to live the good life in nineteenth-century Concord. He did not come into the world chiefly to make it better, he said, but to live in it good or bad. Thoreau knew that if he busied himself with trying to reform others, he would neglect the only true reform possible, the upgrading of himself. ◈

▸ **THE IMAGE: A GUIDE TO PSEUDO-EVENTS IN AMERICA, Daniel J. Boorstin. Atheneum (cloth) $5.00; Harper (paper) $1.75. 315 pp.**

Reviewed by Robert M. Thornton

"THE VILLAINS who are said to be responsible for our perplexity – the hidden persuaders, the organization men, Madison Avenue, Washington bureaucracy, the eggheads, the anti-intellectuals, the power elite," and so on, do not impress Mr. Boorstin with their villainy. What ails us, writes the Chicago professor of American history, "is not so much a vice as a 'nothingness,'" and in seeking to relieve our boredom by filling the void with the pseudo-events he describes in this book we are divorcing ourselves from reality. Mr. Boorstin is "suspicious of all mass medicines for national malaise and national purposelessness. . . . Our real problem," he asserts "is personal."

Ours is a nation founded, and in earlier years guided, by ideals – chiefly, the freedom of persons to work out their own destinies, to discover purpose in their individual lives. But we are losing our

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vision, and American ideals are being replaced by American images – dreams by illusions. As persons, whether individually or in groups, our concern is not, for instance, to be good or kind, but to create the image of being good or kind. We "talk constantly not of things themselves, but of their images."

In the last few paragraphs of his book, Mr. Boorstin pretty well sums up what he has to say about America's lost dream:

". . . the prescriptions which nations offer for themselves are also symptoms of their diseases. But illusory solutions will not cure our illusions. Our discontent begins by finding false villains whom we can accuse of deceiving us. Next we find false heroes whom we expect to liberate us. The hardest, most discomfiting discovery is that each of us must emancipate himself. . . .

"Each of us must disenchant himself, must moderate his expectations, must prepare himself to receive messages coming in from the outside . . . from our own past, from God, from the world we may hate or think we hate. . . . One of our grand illusions is the belief in a 'cure.' There is no cure. There is only the opportunity for discovery. For this the New World gave us a grand unique beginning. . . .

"The least and the most we can hope for is that each of us may penetrate the unknown jungles of images in which we live our daily lives. That we may discover anew where dreams end and where illusions begin. This is enough. Then we may know where we are, and each of us may decide for himself where he wants to go." ◈

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MAXWELL ANDERSON, *The Guaranteed Life*

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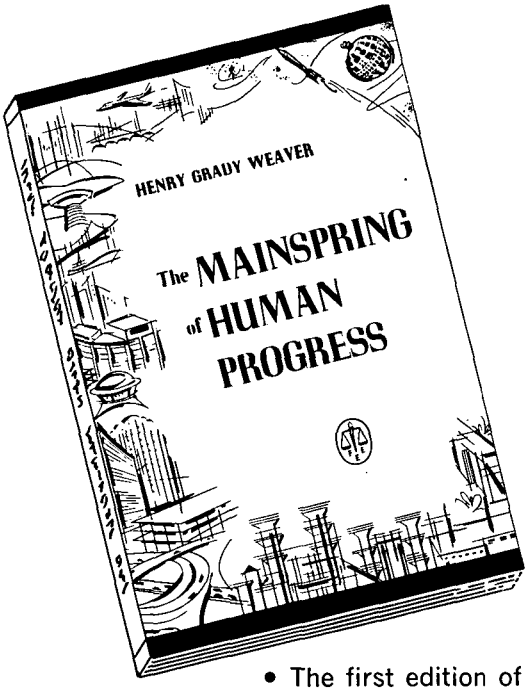

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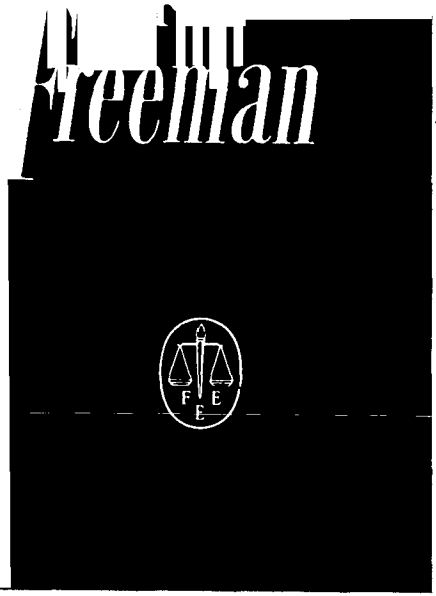

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